INFECTION PREVENTION, SAFETY, and PATIENT INFORMATION

I. INFECTION PREVENTION

Infection prevention means doing everything possible to prevent hospital acquired illnesses. Infection Prevention procedures are designed to protect you as you perform your volunteer duties and responsibilities.

- HANDWASHING is the most effective practice for preventing nosocomial (hospital acquired) infection! Use soap, water, and lots of friction. Lather and scrub hands and wrists for 15 seconds, then rinse thoroughly and dry. DO NOT TOUCH THE FAUCET! Use a paper towel to turn off faucet and to open the bathroom door.

**Handwashing vs Gel:** Handwashing removes visible soil and germs. Gel disinfects, but will not remove soil.

- When entering/leaving each patient’s room, you MUST “Gel In and Gel Out” using the gel dispenser inside the patient’s door. Rub into your hands until dry.

- Always wash your hands before eating, drinking, or handling food, before/after using the toilet, blowing your nose, covering a sneeze, before and after contact with each patient, and after removing gloves.

- Eating, drinking, applying cosmetics or lip balm and handling of contact lenses are prohibited in work areas where there is a potential for exposure. “Work area” is everywhere in the Hospital except the cafeteria, soda shop, lounge areas, nourishment areas, conference rooms, and private offices.

- If you have an illness such as shingles, chicken pox, or a skin infection, check with your doctor or the Employee Health nurse before volunteering.

a. Bloodborne Pathogens

Bloodborne pathogens are disease-producing organisms carried by the blood which can cause illness and death. They are transmitted from person to person by contact with blood or certain other fluids.

- Bloodborne Pathogens with greatest risks are HIV and HBV.
  - HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)
    This virus causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) and is spread by exposure to infected blood or body fluids or from mothers to infants during pregnancy or nursing. Symptoms are continued cough, diarrhea, fever and slow healing sores. It damages a body’s ability to fight illness. No known vaccine or cure.
  - HBV (Hepatitis B Virus)
    It is spread the same as HIV. Symptoms are muscle and joint aches, weakness, vomiting, yellow tint of eyes and skin; may cause cirrhosis or liver cancer. Can be prevented by the Hepatitis B vaccine. This vaccine is offered to employees and volunteers in the Category Y with direct patient contact. If you are Category Y and choose not to take the vaccine, you must sign a statement of declination.
b. Tuberculosis - TB

- Caused by the bacteria "mycobacterium tuberculosis," it enters the body through the respiratory tract when a person with TB coughs, sneezes, speaks, sings, or screams.
- Symptoms: unexplained chronic cough with productive sputum, fever, night sweats, fatigue, unexplained weight loss.
- Isolation for patients with TB includes a sign on the door and door to remain closed.
- All employees/volunteers are required to have skin testing initially and annually.

c. Universal Precautions

This is the assumption that all human blood and body fluids are infectious and contagious and should be treated as such. The best rule of thumb: “If it’s wet and not yours, don’t touch it and don’t let it touch you!”

d. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) includes gloves, mask, protective eye wear, face shields, gowns, aprons, lab coats.
- PPE must be worn if there will be contact with any wet or moist body substance such as blood, oral secretions, feces, urine, vomit, wound or other drainage.

e. Exposure Determination

- Category Y (yes there is risk for occupational exposure; you have reasonable anticipated skin, eye, or mucous membrane contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.
- Category N (there is not risk for occupational exposure)
- OSHA requirements and the Exposure Control Plan can be found on the hospital’s Total Care Compass computer intranet site.

f. Hazardous Materials

- Trash deposited into red trash cans is regulated “Hazardous” waste and should not be handled by volunteers.
- If you are exposed to toxic materials, you should report to the immediate supervisor; first-aid and decontamination procedures will be started by specially trained hospital staff.

g. “The Right to Know” Law – Hazardous Chemical Information Act

- Enacted in the mid-80’s, the law requires employers to tell their employees about hazardous chemicals to which they may be exposed in the workplace and the effects of exposure.
- Employers must label chemicals, provide personal protective equipment, include Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).

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- The labeling of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)
The MSDS provides detailed information about hazardous material. It lists the necessary precautions for protecting yourself and coworkers from dangerous exposure. All containers should be marked with:

- **Identity** - the name of the product
- **Physical/Chemical Characteristics** - additional info about the appearance and odor
- **Fire and Explosion Hazards** - under what conditions the material might catch fire
- **Health Hazard** - how the material could harm you. It explains the signs and symptoms of exposure and what emergency first-aid to follow
- **Control Measures** - what protective clothing or equipment to use when working with the material. It also lists what is involved for clean-up afterwards
- **Precautions for Safe Handling and Use** - explains how to store, move, and use the material. It also dictates what to do in case of a spill or leak

- If no label is present, do not use the product until you have identified it and know the necessary safety precautions.

**II. SAFETY**

**a. Hospital Codes**

- **CODE 1 (Manpower)** A patient or visitor is threatening harm to others; a potential violent episode. Security will respond.

- **CODE 4 (Cardiopulmonary Arrest)** A heart or lung-related emergency. A hospital team with specific assignments will respond.

- **CODE B (Bomb Threat)** Search your area and immediately report any suspicious packages to Security at extension 3333.

- **CODE PINK (Infant Abduction)** Department has specific assignments such as watching doors and stairwells for anyone who may be taking something big enough to carry out a baby.

- **DST ALERT (Major Disaster Plan)** Example: plane crash, school bus accident, etc. Volunteers already at the hospital will report to supervisor for instructions. All other volunteers should wait until called to assist.

- **DR. T (Tornado or Severe Weather)** A severe storm or tornado has been sighted; instructions may include protecting patients from windows or directing visitors to an interior hallway.

- **DR. RED (Fire Emergency)** Remain calm and assist the department as appropriate; know the locations of fire extinguishers and pull boxes in your work areas.

**b. Safety Practices**

Safety depends on clear thinking; IF IN DOUBT, DONT!

- General and electrical safety: report any unsafe conditions or acts you observe to your supervisor or director of Volunteer Services.
Help prevent falls or injuries by calling housekeeping for spills, picking up fallen objects, keeping aisles and stairs clear, using handrails when going up or down stairs.

Observe and report hazards, walk at a safe speed, and wear "safe" closed-toe shoes

Know standards and procedures for your job
Know risks involved with your job, follow the rules of safety
Use your legs, not your back, when lifting
Inspect cords, plugs, and receptacles before use
Call Security, 2249, to assist with any problems/concerns related to personal/patient/visitor/employee/volunteer safety
If you are injured while on duty, report to your supervisor who will complete an Incident Report form and alert the Employee Health Nurse.
Wear your name badge at all times while volunteering; it is a security measure. If you forget it one day, see the Volunteer office for a temporary badge.
Please do not bring children or visitors to work with you.

c. Wheelchair Safety

♦ Always lock the wheels and put the foot pedals up before helping a patient in or out of the chair; always back into the elevators; and push patients at a steady pace.

♦ When discharging a mother and baby, the mother is to hold the baby; volunteers are not allowed to hold or put the baby in the car seat.

♦ Do not transport patients with IVs or attachments.

♦ Do not enter Isolation (Contact Precaution) rooms.

♦ Do not lift or move patients.

♦ If you are uncomfortable about a situation, get help from the nursing staff.

d. Fire Safety

Response to fire or fire alarms must be quick. Each employee/volunteer is responsible for fire prevention and accurate response during a fire emergency. If you discover a fire, remember to remain calm.

To activate any emergency preparedness plan, Dial 3333

Remember the initials RACE in responding to a fire emergency:

R = Rescue anyone in danger
A = Activate the alarm
C = Confine the fire (close the doors)
E = Evacuate / Extinguish if possible

e. Using a fire extinguisher

P = Pull the pin
A = Aim at base of fire
S = Squeeze the lever
S = Sweep from side to side
III. PATIENT INFORMATION

- **Patient Rights and Responsibilities:** Information about patient rights and responsibilities are given when a patient is admitted to the hospital:
  - Right to personal privacy and confidentiality of information
  - Right to respectful care that honors the patient’s values and beliefs
  - Right to a language interpreter
  - Right to make decisions relating to the patient’s own medical care
  - Right to report a complaint to Risk Management

- **Confidentiality:** Our volunteers and employees are committed to maintaining patient privacy. Anything that a volunteer or employee learns about a patient is confidential information. Regardless of whether you discover that your neighbor or co-worker is a patient, or if you overhear a discussion by the medical and nursing staff about a patient’s condition, please remember **everything is confidential.**

- **Diversity:** The health system sees a diverse population of people and volunteers should be non-judgmental and respectful of diverse lifestyles, cultures, faiths, and values. Do not discuss sensitive issues about patients/visitors, as you may appear discourteous and uncompassionate.

- **Door Signs:** Before entering a patient’s room, if the door is closed, pay close attention to signs (isolation, contact precaution, etc) and speak with the patient’s nurse for instructions.
  - **Contact Precaution signs:** These brightly colored signs (orange, blue) indicate that a patient that is on isolation. Volunteers DO NOT enter isolation rooms.
  - **Butterfly:** The mother has lost a baby.
  - **Sunflower:** The mother is putting the baby up for adoption.
  - **Stork:** The baby has been transported to a level 3 nursery at another facility.
  - **House:** The parents in room are not patients; they are staying in the room while their baby is a patient in the nursery.
  - **Stop Lights:** These signs identify a patient’s risk for falling: Red- high fall risk, Yellow- moderate fall risk, Green- no fall risk

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