

MEDICAL STAFF STANDARD

SUBJECT: Patient Care Responsibilities & Coverage

RESPONSIBLE PERSONS: St. Ann's Medical Staff

POLICY:

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: when there is more than one physician caring for a patient concurrently, it is important to be able to establish which physician is primarily responsible at any give time. The physician responsible for the patient at the time of admission will be transferred to another physician and that physician agrees to accept the primary responsibility. Transfer of responsibility back to the admitting physician or to another physician will be similarly documented.

Official transfer must be documented by an order on the chart, written by transferring physician or given by him as a verbal order. Nursing service is responsible for confirming the recipient physician's willingness to accept the transfer.

If emergency surgery is necessary, the primary responsibility will automatically be transferred to the operating surgeon.

ORAL SURGEONS, DENTISTS AND PODIATRISTS: a patient admitted for dental or podiatric care is the dual responsibility of the dentist or podiatrist and a physician member of the Medical Staff, except oral surgeons who have been credentialed to perform history and physical examinations.

- The **oral surgeon** may be the sole admitter if the patient has no medical complications.
- The **dentist** is responsible for dental history of disease and oral examination, completion of operative reports, progress notes and summary.
- The **podiatrist** is responsible for the history of podiatric disease and examination, operative report, progress notes and summary.
- The **physician** is responsible for medical history and physical examination and supervision of general health while in the hospital.

ALTERNATIVE PHYSICIAN COVERAGE: each member of the Medical Staff shall have a substitute equivalent practitioner who is a member in good standing of the Medical Staff available to care for the practitioner's patients in the Hospital in the practitioner's absence and is able to respond in a timely manner (*refer to Medical Staff Bylaws, Article III – Membership, Section 3.03 (5)*).

The Chairman of the practitioner's department, the President of the Medical Staff or his designee shall have the authority to call any member of the Medical Staff should the attending practitioner and the alternate be unavailable.

If the Chairman of the practitioner's department, the President of the Medical Staff or his designee is unavailable, the Emergency Department physician on duty is responsible for arranging appropriate medical coverage until the attending physician is available to care for the patient.

DEVELOPED BY: St. Ann's Medical Staff **ORIGINAL DATE:** February 1974
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REPLACES: Medical Staff Rules & Regulations
REVIEWED BY: Medical Executive Committee 11/4/2002
APPROVAL FOR IMPLEMENTATION BY: St. Ann's Hospital Board of Trustees
DATE: 12/17/2002

Signature on File
Steve Tuttle, M.D., President, Medical Staff

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Kirk Hummer, RN, Chief Operating Officer