

PROCEDURE FOR: Change in Patient Condition: Chain of Command Notification

DESIRED PATIENT

OUTCOME: Timely and effective communication between appropriate caregivers regarding a patient's condition.

POLICY: The nurse assigned to the patient or supervising the care of the patient is responsible for notification of and communication to the medical staff regarding significant changes or significant deterioration in the patient's condition and for assuring that there is physician response.

- PROCEDURE:**
1. Changes in the condition of the patient are determined by assessments utilizing defined parameters, current and past medical condition, medical orders, and/or by patient safety factors.
 2. The nurse notifies the responsible physician utilizing appropriate channels and chain of command. Notify physicians in the following order unless otherwise indicated by physician order, by routine service, or as indicated by the patient condition:
 - a. House Officer or LIP who is medically responsible for the care of the patient;
 - b. Senior and/or Chief Resident or Fellow;
 - c. Attending Physician.
 - d. Activate RRT (Rapid Response Team per HAM 08-055) when patient's clinical condition warrants it.
 3. As necessary, notify the charge nurse, assistant nurse manager, nurse manager, nursing supervisor and/or administrator on-call for administrative and/or clinical consultation and/or assistance.
 4. In the event that there continues to be concern about the patient's condition, follow further nursing and medical staff chain of command. The nursing supervisor (in house) and administrator (on call) will determine the need to initiate the following steps:
 - a. Notification of the Medical Director of the unit;
 - b. Notification of the Chief of Service; and/or
 - c. Notification of the Department Chair.
 5. Document in the medical record the date, time and name of each physician notified, actions taken and/or patient's response to treatment. Documentation should also include all nursing assessments and findings, nursing actions and notification of charge nurse/nurse supervisor. All entries in the medical record need to be dated, timed and signed.

APPROVAL: Nursing Administration

EFFECTIVE DATE: 4/07

REVISION DATES: 7/09

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REVIEWED DATES: 2/09