

PROCEDURE FOR: AWOL (Absent Without Leave): Assessment of Risk and Management of

- POLICY:**
1. All patients admitted to Inpatient Psychiatric Units will be evaluated on admission by the admitting RN for AWOL risk.
 2. Initial Screening Guidelines for AWOL Risk will be documented in the Multidisciplinary Database.
 3. The admitting RN will assign appropriate AWOL status level and will review level with admitting MD.
 4. The admitting MD will write an order reflecting the status level and the parameters of care using the Daily Observation Plan Protocol/ Order Sheet.
 5. Frequency of reassessment of AWOL risk will be dependent upon results of screening guidelines.
 6. In the event a patient is AWOL, unit staff are not authorized to contact state or local police. Calls to outside police departments may only be initiated by the Health Center police.
 7. All inquiries from media regarding AWOL status must be referred to Hospital Administration.

PROCEDURE: Notification following patient AWOL.

ACTION

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Staff member who finds the patient AWOL is to notify charge nurse on unit, who then notifies the University Police. The police are provided with a description of the patient to assist in returning the patient to the unit.
 2. Charge nurse notifies:
 - a. Covering medical staff.
 - b. Nurse Manager or, on off shifts, the Administrative Manager.
 3. The Covering medical staff notifies:
 - a. The Attending or Faculty on call.
 - b. Patient's family as appropriate.
 4. A Patient Safety Net report is completed as soon as possible.
- b. Family will be notified as indicated according to the level of involvement in the patient's treatment.

PROCEDURE FOR: AWOL (Absent Without Leave): Assessment of Risk and Management of

PROCEDURE: Notification after return of AWOL patient

ACTION

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. If the patient is found by University Police, he/she must be returned to the unit for evaluation.
2. If the patient is found by the unit staff or returns on his/her own, the charge nurse then calls:
 - a. University Police
 - b. Attending Physician
 - c. Nurse Manager
 - d. Family of the patient (when appropriate)

DISCHARGE AFTER AWOL:

1. If the patient has not returned by midnight on the day of AWOL, he/she is reported as discharged on the midnight census.

APPROVAL: Nursing Standards Committee

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1974

REVISION DATES: 1977, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1988, 1989, 12/90, 4/00, 10/00, 10/03, 6/06, 7/08