

PROCEDURE FOR: Patients' Rights: Telephone, Mail, Visitors

PURPOSE: To outline the actions of the interdisciplinary team regarding management of patients' rights.

- POLICY:
1. Each patient has the right to make and receive telephone calls; communicate by sealed mail with any individual, group or agency; be furnished with writing materials and reasonable postage; receive mail; and receive visitors at regular visiting hours.
  2. The patient's family has the right to visit at defined hours if they are unable to visit during regular visiting hours.
  3. The rights identified in policy statement #1 may be denied or limited if the attending physician determines that it would be clinically harmful for the patient to exercise the rights.
  4. The attending physician, in consultation as appropriate with nursing staff, may write an order restricting telephone calls if such calls are obscene, threatening, or if it is clinically harmful for the patient.
  5. When a telephone restriction is ordered, the attending physician notifies in writing the patient's family and any persons who regularly make calls to or receive calls from the patient of the restriction and the reasons for them. A copy of this explanation is signed by the attending and placed in the patient's permanent medical record.
  6. The attending physician, in consultation as appropriate with nursing staff, may write an order restricting RECEIPT of mail if it is determined clinically harmful for the patient. Any patient may SEND mail.
  7. Whenever a mail restriction is ordered, all such correspondence is returned unopened to the sender with an explanation signed by the attending, for its return. A copy of this explanation is made a part of the patient's permanent medical record.
  8. The attending physician may write an order restricting visitors if it is determined clinically harmful to the patient.
  9. Whenever an order is written restricting visitors, the attending informs the patient's family and other visitors. A copy of the notification of this restriction and the reasons for it are signed by the attending and placed in the patient's permanent medical record.
  10. Once the patient may receive visitors again, the attending shall immediately notify the patient's family and other visitors who have requested notification.

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APPROVAL: Nursing Standards Committee

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12/95

REVISION DATES: 4/00, 10/03, 6/06, 7/08



Inpatient Psychiatry  
John Dempsey Hospital  
The University of Connecticut Health Center

ADDRESSOGRAPH

FORM FOR RESTRICTION OF TELEPHONE/MAIL/VISITORS

\_\_\_\_\_, is not allowed to  
Name of Patient

accept or make telephone calls, accept mail, have visitors

(circle appropriate area) for the following reason(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF ATTENDING PHYSICIAN

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE