

Original: 12/2012

Minor Review:

Full Review:

Responsible Person: Director of Safety and Security

Approving Committee: Environmental Safety, Administrative Nurse Practice Council

Category: Safety

Cross Reference: Chain of Command Patient Care; Medication Brought from Home; Metal Detection Policy; Valuables, Care of Use of Valuables Envelope

Type: Policy

I. PURPOSE:

To provide a process for searching a patient's room and/or belongings when patients exhibit behaviors of self harm or inflection of harm onto others.

II. POLICY:

There must be reasonable suspicion that a patient has contraband prior to conducting a room/belongings search.

III. DEFINITIONS:

A. Contraband: Any item that is banned from the hospital and/or is of harm to the patient or others. Items included but are not limited to: guns, knives, ammunition, chemical substances, illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia, lighters, and other items that pose safety or risk as determined by staff.

B. Reasonable suspicion: sufficient basis to search based on specific and relevant facts and the totality of circumstances.

IV. GUIDELINES

A. If reasonable suspicion is present follow the chain of command, including but not limited to, notifying the Charge Nurse/Nursing Supervisor, to determine appropriateness of conducting search.

B. If appropriate, notify provider of behaviors exhibited or purposeful description of suspicion.

C. Notify security of the need for room/belonging searching assistance.

D. Security will perform the search immediately after notification.

E. If appropriate, security and/or patient care staff may notify the patient of search and provide rationale or reasoning.

F. Security will search the room and all patient belongings.

G. If contraband or self harming items are identified, security will label, document, and lock or store items in a secure area.

H. Persons who are found to be in violation of state/federal law or city ordinance for weapon offenses may be subject to criminal charges. Weapons will be confiscated and placed into police evidence.

I. If items are of value and deemed appropriate by security, place in a Valuables Envelope.

J. Items removed and location will be documented in the Care Team Communication.

K. If appropriate, notify the provider of any significant findings.

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