

ST. MARK'S HOSPITAL

DEPARTMENT: Subcategories of Policy Level not selected.	DESCRIPTION: Observers in the Hospital
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EFFECTIVE DATE: Not Set	REFERENCE NUMBER:

SCOPE:

All St. Mark's Hospital affiliated employees, physicians' vendors, on-site subcontractors, affiliated physician practices, and credentialed members of the medical staff (including Allied Health Professionals). See separate policies for students and vendors.

PURPOSE:

This policy is intended to:

1. Ensure that all observational experiences are conducted with the rights, dignity, and best interests of the patients in mind.
2. Facilitate compliance for observation with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information (Privacy Standards).
3. Establish a standard and requirements for those who wish to shadow hospital staff or physicians or observe patient care activities or procedures.
4. Define the circumstances in which observations or shadowing are appropriate.

DEFINITION

An observer is an individual who desires enhanced understanding of hospital operations that could best be acquired by closely observing or "shadowing" Medical Staff, Allied Health Professionals, and other clinicians in their patient care activities. These individuals are not fulfilling clinical rotation requirements. The experience for observers will be experiential only. The individual observing WILL NOT be involved with, assist with, or participate in any patient care.

Without exception, individuals seeking observation experiences **must**:

- Be at least 18 years of age and provide proof of age in the form of a driver's license, passport, state issued identification card or HCA badge.
- Have a sponsor (St. Mark's employee, physician) willing to allow observation of their clinical practice (St. Mark's will not make these arrangements on observer's behalf.)
- Be a Physician, Allied Health Professional, or other clinician (RN, Respiratory Therapist, etc.). Proof of active license required. Observers cannot be a student at a school that has an active affiliation/contract with St. Mark's Hospital. Additionally, observers cannot be an approved St. Mark's Hospital vendor (eDHP).

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POLICY:

1. All observation experiences are conducted in a manner consistent with patient privacy, patient rights, and infection control policies.
2. Observer must be under the direct observation of a hospital employee or hospital medical staff member at all times.
3. Observer must follow the Dress Code policy and Dress in Procedural Area policy.
4. Observer must provide written proof of a negative TB Skin Test or negative QuantiFERON Gold/ T-SPOT blood test completed within the past 12 months.
5. If the job observation will occur at any time between the months of October through March, observer must provide written proof of flu vaccination for the current season.
6. The patient must provide written consent on the *HIPAA Authorization for Observation* form prior to the observer entering the patient's room, observing a procedure, or reviewing records. Written consent from the patient must be obtained from each patient that the observer accesses and ST. MARK'S HOSPITAL respects the right of the patient to refuse the individual access to observe.
7. ST. MARK'S HOSPITAL does not allow high school students or other lay persons to observe in the hospital on the basis of curiosity or general interest.
8. Relatives and friends of ST. MARK'S HOSPITAL employees or affiliated physicians/advanced practitioners cannot be an observer unless all observer requirements are met, no conflict of interest is deemed to exist and administration approves the application.
9. Observers will only be accommodated during normal business hours of the department where the observation will occur. These hours may vary by department. Observation experiences should be coordinated with the appropriate department director.
10. Observation approval is limited to a 30-day time frame. Observers who desire additional experiences after the 30-day approval time frame must re-apply.
11. Observers in the surgical suites will be limited to one per provider in a room at a given time unless prior approval is granted by the Surgical Services Director or designee.
12. If an employee is uncertain if an individual is authorized to observe, the employee should notify hospital leadership immediately (department director, nurse supervisor, clinical supervisor, or member of Senior Leadership). The observer will be asked to leave if all requirements have not been met.
13. The Observer is prohibited from providing any patient care and scrubbing in and being in the sterile field.
14. The Observer will wear an identification badge provided by the hospital.

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PROCEDURE:

The following forms and requirements must be completed prior to the observation experience:

❖ ***Application and Agreement for Individuals Desiring to Observe at St. Mark's Hospital***

By signing this form, the observer and the sponsor understand and agree that observers are prohibited from “scrubbing in and being in the sterile field,” and from providing any patient care.

The application form is available from Placement Coordinator in Education or electronically on the St. Mark's Hospital website and must be submitted to the Placement Coordinator at least 30 days before the requested observation date.

This form must be reviewed, approved & signed by a member of the Senior Administrative Team (“C” Suite) prior to the observation experience.

The observer bears all risk and responsibility and completely indemnifies ST. MARK'S HOSPITAL for injuries or unfavorable impacts upon him/her as a result of his/her observation experience.

❖ ***Observer Profile Form***

This form details necessary contact information for the observer in addition to emergency contacts. This form must be completed prior to observation.

❖ ***Orientation Booklet and Quiz (If Applicable)***

Prior to the observation experience, the observer reviews the “Observer Orientation Booklet” and completes the related quiz.

❖ ***Statement of Responsibility***

Observer will review and sign Statement of Responsibility prior to observation.

❖ ***Confidentiality and Security Agreement***

This form is signed by the observer prior to the observation experience. By signing this form the observer agrees to keep anything they see and/or hear while at the facility confidential.

❖ ***Parking Policy Agreement (If Applicable)***

Observer reviews and signs the Parking Policy Agreement prior to the observation experience.

Packet of required documents is available from Placement Coordinator in Education or electronically on the St. Mark's Hospital website. Completed required documentation will be submitted to Education Department.

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If application is approved, the observer will complete the remainder of the required documentation and return to Placement Coordinator at least 14 days prior to requested observation date.

Observer will be notified when all documentation requirements have been met. Observation approval is then valid for a 30-day period. Observer will be provided a name badge which is to be worn at all times while in the hospital. All appropriate department directors will also be notified of the approval of the request.

The following documentation must be completed on the first day of observation.

❖ ***Non-Employee Department Orientation***

Prior to the observation experience, the department director or designee orients the observer to the department. This form is signed by both the observer and the department director/designee. Form will be returned to the Education department.

The following forms must be completed and/or maintained during the entire 30-day observation period.

❖ ***HIPAA Authorization for Observation***

This form provides patient authorization for the 'observer' to view any procedure, assessment or patient care. The form must be completed for each & every patient **prior** to the observation experience. Request for patient consent should be initiated by the sponsor. It is the patient's right to refuse to have an observer present during the procedure. This form will be filed in the medical record by the sponsor or the department director/designee.

❖ ***Observation Patient List***

This form is used for tracking and quality improvement purposes. During the observation, the observer must keep a tally of observed patients. When an observer observes a patient, a patient sticker and date will be placed on the form. This list must stay with observer and then be turned in at the end of the day to administration. Observer sponsor is responsible for completion of 'Observer Patient List.'

If the observer becomes physically or emotionally affected by a seriously ill patient, critical situation or procedure, they should immediately leave the patient care area.

The burden for ensuring appropriate conduct and adherence to ST. MARK'S HOSPITAL policies lies with both the sponsor and the Department Director.

SEE ALSO:

Parking Guidelines and Enforcement Policy- 900-415
Dress Code Policy- 500-100

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Dress in Procedural Area Policy- PP.GEN.D 2.0 Visitors in the OR Policy- PP.SUR.V 2.0 Education – Clinical Students Policy- PP.GEN.E 11.3 HrAnswers- Dependent Healthcare Professional (DHP) Request for Enrollment by Vendor Company
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