

Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital Policy and Procedure		
Minor Surgical Procedures Policy		
Effective: 5/5/16	Revised: March 2023	Due to Review: March 2025

POLICY

Minor surgical procedures may be ordered and performed at the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital (VPCH) by contracted medical consultants.

Medical consultants shall inform the VPCH Medical Director and the attending psychiatrist whenever they determine that a minor surgical procedure is necessary and shall be performed at VPCH.

DEFINITIONS:

Minor Surgical Procedure: a procedure for a non-life-threatening condition on the superficial structures of the body or a manipulative procedure that does not involve a serious risk.

Procedures include, but are not limited to:

- Repair of simple laceration
- Incision and drainage of abscesses and infected cysts
- Shave/punch/fusiform excisional biopsies of skin lesions
- Irrigation/curettage of impacted ear wax
- Treatment of paronychia and ingrown nails

The medical consultant shall inform the attending psychiatrist prior to performing a procedure and describe the rationale for the procedure in a progress note. If the procedure is not listed in this policy, the medical consultant shall obtain approval from the Medical Director prior to proceeding.

PROCEDURE**Informed Consent**

The medical consultant shall obtain the informed consent of the hospitalized person or guardian before performing any minor surgical procedure in writing.

The informed consent process includes a description of the condition being treated and an explanation of the proposed treatment. The informed consent process also includes discussion about:

- The potential benefits, risks, and side effects of the proposed care, treatment, and services.
- The likelihood of the hospitalized person achieving their goals.
- Reasonable alternatives to the proposed care, treatment, and services. The discussion

should encompass the risks, benefits, and side effects related to the alternatives and the risks related to not receiving the proposed care, treatment, and services.

- Cost of proposed care, treatment, and services.
- The right to freely consent to or refuse the treatment without coercion, retaliation, or punishment.

If a guardian has been appointed for the individual, the medical consultant shall notify the guardian about changes in the individual's condition and treatment and seek informed consent. Vermont law permits a guardian to consent to a surgical procedure.

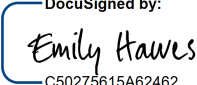
In cases where a patient or guardian refuses a recommended treatment, an alternative clinically appropriate treatment acceptable to the hospitalized person, including no treatment, shall be explored and offered where possible.

Equipment

Medical consultants shall, at their discretion, use materials available at VPCH or, when necessary, obtain disposable items and surgical instruments from their practice sites including medical group practices and the emergency department. Disposable items (*e.g.* scalpels and sutures) shall be placed in biohazard containers at VPCH; surgical instruments needing sterilization (*e.g.* hemostats and forceps) shall be cleansed, packaged and returned to the appropriate site by the medical consultant. Specimens obtained through biopsy or other procedures shall be managed by the medical consultant.

Process and Documentation

1. The medical consultant shall coordinate the scheduling of a minor surgical procedure with the on-duty Nurse Supervisor.
2. The medical consultant shall inform the Nurse Supervisor before bringing any sharp object into a care area.
3. A registered nurse shall accompany and remain present throughout a minor surgical procedure. The nurse may offer routine psychiatric nursing assistance to the physician but shall not participate directly in the technical procedure.
4. The medical consultant shall document the nature and outcome of the minor surgical procedure in a progress note and provide any follow-up care instructions/orders to nursing via communication in the electronic health record.

Approved by	Signature	Date
Emily Hawes Commissioner Vermont Department of Mental Health	 C50275615A62462...	3/15/2023