

Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital Policy and Procedure		
Media Inquiries		
Effective: May 2019	Revised: September 2024	Due to Review: September 2026

POLICY

All media inquiries to the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital (VPCH) must go through the Department of Mental Health (DMH) Policy Team.

In order to protect the privacy rights of individuals receiving psychiatric treatment, federal and state laws prohibit a hospital spokesperson from acknowledging that an individual may be a person receiving treatment at VPCH without specific written consent from the individual or their legal representative. Disclosures of psychiatric treatment information must include a statement prohibiting redisclosures of such information without authorization.

PROCEDURE

General Inquiries

All media-related inquiries must be directed to the DMH Policy Team. The Policy Team will coordinate what, if any, information will be provided and who will provide said information. If a request comes outside normal business hours, the requestor should be notified that a response will not be provided until the next business day.

Matters of Public Record

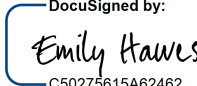
Matters of public record refer to situations that are reportable by law to public authorities, such as law enforcement agencies, the coroner, or public health officer. While laws and/or regulations require VPCH to report a variety of information to public authorities, it is not the responsibility of VPCH to provide that information in response to calls or inquiries from the media. Instead, such calls should be directed to the appropriate public authority.

Media Visits

Media visits inside VPCH are not allowed. Should the media wish to film the outside of VPCH, but on VPCH property, the Policy Team must be notified and grant approval with any conditions.

References:

- Agency of Human Services (AHS) HIPPA Standards and Guidelines

Approved by	Signature	Date
Emily Hawes, Commissioner, Vermont Department of Mental Health	 <p>DocuSigned by: <i>Emily Hawes</i> C50275615A62462...</p>	9/26/2024