

Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital Procedure

Professional, Business, and Other Hospital Visitors

Revised: X

Date: 7/12/16

Note: This procedure applies to professional and business visitors **only**. These include:

- Patient's legal counsel, including Vermont Legal Aid
- Disability Rights Vermont: attorneys and advocates
- Patient Representatives
- Other Department of Mental Health employees, including Assistant Attorney Generals
- Physicians/clinical staff
- Employees of Designated Agencies
- Law Enforcement
- Judicial Officers and staff
- Clergy/other religious leaders
- Applicants to VPCCH who have been previously interviewed
- Contracted professionals from Central Vermont Medical Center
- State or Federal Regulatory entities (e.g. Investigators from Adult Protective Services, Surveyors from Vermont Survey and Certification)
- National Accreditation entities (e.g. the Joint Commission)

This procedure also applies to delivery and other service personnel who visit the hospital for a business purpose.

For regular visitors coming to see patients, please refer to the *Patient Visitors Procedure*.

All other visitors who do not fit into the "patient visitor" or "professional, business, or other hospital visitors" categories shall follow the *Patient Visitors Procedure*.

I. Visitors of Hospital Employees or Contracted Physicians who will Not Enter Patient Care Units and/or the Recovery Services Area During their Visit

- A. Hospital employees or contracted physicians who expect a visitor shall inform Reception (or Admissions if they are covering for Reception) in advance of the visit.
- B. All visitors to the hospital (except for authorized BGS staff and delivery service personnel) shall enter and exit through the front door of the hospital.
 - i. Hospital employees and contracted physicians **may not** escort a visitor **into or out of** the hospital through an employee entrance.
- C. If the hospital employee or contracted physician is not present when their visitor arrives, but Reception has been made aware in advance of the visit, Reception shall check the person's photo ID, sign the visitor into the Visitor Log, and provide a temporary badge to the visitor. The visitor does not have to be wanded. The visitor shall wear the badge in a visible location throughout the entire visit. The visitor may then be allowed into the lobby area to wait while Reception calls the employee or contracted physician. The employee or contracted physician shall then come to the lobby and escort their visitor into other areas

of the hospital. If Reception has not been made aware in advance of the visit, the visitor must remain in the outer entrance area until the employee or contracted physician comes to receive the visitor. The employee or contracted physician is responsible at all times for their visitor and required to always escort them within areas of the hospital.

- D. If the hospital employee or contracted physician is present when their visitor arrives, and vouches for the visitor's identity, Reception shall sign the visitor into the Visitor Log and provide a temporary badge to the visitor. The visitor does not have to be wanded. The visitor shall wear the badge in a visible location throughout the entire visit. The employee or contracted physician shall escort their visitor into other areas of the hospital. The employee or contracted physician is responsible at all times for their visitor and required to always escort them within areas of the hospital.
- E. Visitors of hospital employees or contracted physicians are not required to store keys, cell phones, or other personal belongings in the visitor lockers.
- F. At all times during the visit, VPCH employees and contracted physicians and other professionals shall maintain the confidentiality of all VPCH patients consistent with all VPCH policy and procedures.

II. Visitors of Hospital Employees or Contracted Physicians who will Enter Patient Care Units and/or the Recovery Services Area During their Visit

- A. Follow same procedure for A through E above.
- B. In addition to the above procedures, hospital employees and contracted physicians and other professionals must follow the attached Appendix A – Guidelines for employees Hosting Visitors to, or Through, a Patient Care Area.
- C. At all times during the visit, VPCH employees and contracted physicians and other professionals shall maintain the confidentiality of all VPCH patients consistent with all VPCH policy and procedures.

III. Delivery and Other Service Personnel Who Enter the Hospital though the Loading Dock

- A. Delivery and other service personnel who enter the hospital though the loading dock shall be accompanied by a hospital employee at all times while in the building. The visitor does not have to be wanded.
- B. At all times during the visit, hospital employees, contracted physicians and visitors shall maintain the confidentiality of all VPCH patients consistent with all VPCH policy and procedures.

Approved by	Signature	Date
Frank Reed, Commissioner of DMH		11/29/16

APPENDIX A

GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEES OR CONTRACTED PHYSICIANS HOSTING VISITORS TO, OR THROUGH, A PATIENT CARE AREA

If you are hosting one or more visitors to the hospital, please follow these guidelines if the visit will include entering into any of the patient care areas:

- The Recovery Services area (either the Courtyard, Activity Yard, Library, Exercise room, Greenhouse, Comfort Room, etc.)
- Unit A, B, C, or D

Guidelines for visitors who will be entering a patient care area:

- Leave all briefcases, handbags, backpacks, laptops and other containers that may contain items restricted from the patient care area, in a locked office outside the patient care area or in a visitor locker near the hospital entrance.
- When in a patient care area, do not leave any objects that could be used to cause harm, such as pens or pencils. We discourage the wearing of dangling jewelry, scarves and similar items in the patient care area, and reserve the right to require removal of such items.

Responsibilities of the hospital employee or contracted physicians hosting visitors

Before entering any patient care area with one or more visitors, the VPCH employee or contracted physicians hosting visitors shall inform the Nursing Supervisor that s/he would like to enter the patient care area with visitor/s. Inform the Nursing Supervisor:

- That all briefcases, handbags, backpacks, laptops and other containers that may contain items restricted from the patient care area have been left outside the patient care area.
- Of the number of visitors and your plan for this visit to, or through, the patient care area

Responsibilities of the Nursing Supervisor

- Approve or delay the visit, based on an assessment of safety of the Recovery Services (RS) area (the indoor RS area).
- If the visitor will be brought onto a patient care unit, or into the Courtyard or Activity Yard, the Nursing Supervisor shall consult with the Charge Nurse or designee regarding whether or not the visit will occur. If the visit is to occur, the Charge Nurse or designee shall plan for the visit by informing other members of

the nursing staff and, if necessary, any patients who may encounter the visitor/s on the units or in the Activity Yard or Courtyard.

Leaving the Hospital

- When leaving the patient care area or immediately after leaving that area, the employee or contractor hosting the visitor shall immediately inform the Nursing Supervisor or Charge Nurse.
- Hospital visitors who entered through the front door and Receptionist Area shall exit the hospital through the Receptionist Area and front door. Employees shall not escort visitors out of the hospital through the Employee Entrance.