

Medical Staff Code of Conduct

Ample evidence exists documenting that a hostile and unprofessional work environment leads to reduced quality and productivity as well as low morale. In order to promote patient safety, quality, and a professional, collegial culture, Arkansas Children's Hospital (ACH) physicians and dentists agree to abide by the following code of professional conduct. Adherence to this code of conduct is a condition of medical staff membership and violations may result in limitation, suspension, or loss of membership on and privileges of the ACH Medical Staff. This code of conduct is intended to be consistent with and amplify existing ACH policies rather than supplant any policy or guideline. The ACH Medical Staff Bylaws serve as the authoritative document regarding medical staff actions and governance.

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

It is the policy of ACH that all individuals, employees, physicians, and independent and dependent practitioners conduct themselves in a professional and cooperative manner while in the hospital or on hospital property. All medical staff members are expected to treat all persons with courtesy, respect, and dignity, and to ensure optimum patient care by promoting a safe, cooperative, and professional healthcare environment. Medical staff members are expected to prevent or eliminate (to the extent possible) conduct that:

- Interferes with an individual's ability to practice competently;
- Affects the ability of others to do their jobs;
- Disrupts the operations of the hospital;
- Creates a "hostile work environment" for hospital employees or other medical staff members;
- or
- Reflects poorly on the community's perception of ACH or confidence in the hospital's ability to provide quality patient care.

Collaboration, communication, and collegiality are essential for the provision of safe and competent patient care. Therefore, consistent with the mission and service standards of ACH Medical Staff of ACH are expected to:

1. Treat all patients, families, members of the healthcare team, students, volunteers, and visitors with respect, cultural sensitivity, civility and fairness and remain free of behavior that undermines the mission and service standards of ACH.
2. Participate actively in supporting ACH Strategic Imperatives including quality and safety programs and ongoing efforts to improve outcomes. Comply when asked to participate with specific quality and patient safety reviews, root cause analyses, and improvement projects.
3. Treat all patients, families, members of the healthcare team, students, volunteers, and visitors ethically without bias based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, or sexual orientation.

4. When in a supervisory role, provide clear direction and timely feedback, as well as constructive suggestions and opportunities for improvement or remediation when needed. Resolve conflicts and counsel colleagues and subordinates privately and in a non-threatening, constructive manner.
5. Teach, conduct research, and care for patients with competence, honesty and high ethical standards. Clinicians must not make provision of care contingent upon personal business relationships with patients, research subjects, or their families.
6. Meet professional responsibilities; i.e., complete medical records, arrive for clinics or surgical procedures on time, timely response to consults, on-call availability, etc.
7. Be familiar with and follow ACH policies and procedures applicable to their work, and require those reporting to them to do the same. Medical staff should promptly address violations of institutional policies and cooperate with investigations and audits as called upon. Respect patient privacy and the confidentiality of information consistent with HIPAA regulations.
8. Maintain all licenses and certifications required for their professional positions, participate in education and training as necessary to maintain professional competence, and be fit for duty during work time, including on-call responsibilities.
9. Contribute positively to Medical Staff, Professional Partnership, and hospital committees by accepting administrative and/or professional leadership roles and by participating in the development of policies, procedures, and clinical guidelines.
10. Use ACH facilities, equipment, supplies and resources, including telecommunications and information technology resources, responsibly and for legitimate hospital business.
11. Maintain accurate and complete records which meet required documentation standards (CMS, Joint Commission).
12. Avoid conflicts of interest where there is self-interest in the outcome, or an appearance of self-interest. If there is a conflict of interest, disclose to the appropriate authority in accordance with the ACH Conflict of Interest policy.
13. Use internal mechanisms for resolving conflicts between medical staff and ACH employees, between medical staff members, or between medical staff and patients/families. Questions regarding the appropriate course of action to address and resolve conflicts should be directed to the ACH Chief Medical Officer or ACH Chief of Staff.
14. Provide care that promotes a positive patient and family experience. In the event a patient or family member expresses concerns about care received at ACH, encourage the patient or family member to contact the ACH patient/family representative and if needed seek outside opinions from other care providers, as opposed to encouraging legal action against the hospital or care providers at ACH.

As a representative of ACH, Medical Staff members must, at all times, refrain from behavior described below. Please also see "Professional Conduct" in the ACH Physician Handbook.

1. Behavior that is inappropriate, unprofessional, dishonest, disrespectful, or disruptive. Disruptive behavior may include shouting, belligerence, unwarranted interruption of patient care, and verbal intimidation.
2. Threatening patients, family members, members of the healthcare team, students, volunteers, and/or visitor either verbally or physically.
3. Sexual or other harassment or discrimination based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability or sexual orientation. If a member of the Medical Staff becomes involved in a romantic relationship with an individual who reports to her/him, she/he is expected to promptly disclose the relationship to her/his Service/Section Chief and the ACH Chief Medical Officer. The Service/Section Chief or the ACH Chief Medical Officer will arrange an appropriate transfer of supervisory authority. If the Service/Section Chief director is involved in a romantic relationship with an individual who reports to her/him, she/he must disclose to the ACH Chief Medical Officer.
4. Use of profanity or similarly offensive language especially in patient care areas or public spaces.
5. Name calling, or giving discourteous orders or demands to any individual at ACH, including but not limited to, patients, families, members of the healthcare team, students, volunteers, and visitors.
6. Demeaning critical remarks directed toward any individual at ACH in front of or within earshot of any other individual at ACH, including but not limited to patients, families, members of the healthcare team, students, volunteers, and visitors. Constructive criticism of or concerns about employees or staff members should be addressed to the staff member or appropriate supervisor in a courteous manner and, when possible, in private.
7. Recording any inappropriate comments in medical records concerning patients, families, members of the healthcare team, students, volunteers, and visitors.
8. Communicating concerns or grievances regarding any aspect of patient care by other ACH physicians/other healthcare providers or ACH employees to the media or in any other public venue.
9. Soliciting a patient's or family member's participation in supporting the physician's point of view in regard to a concern or grievance.
10. Encouraging patients or family members to pursue litigation against the ACH or other physician/practitioner practicing at ACH. Physicians should encourage concerned patients or families to contact the patient/family representative or to seek other opinions from appropriate physicians regarding their care.
11. Inappropriate or unprofessional emotional involvement with patients or families. See Therapeutic Boundaries Professional Relationships with Patients and Families policy.

12. Maintaining a supervisory role over a family member, including a domestic partner. If a faculty member becomes the supervisor of a member of her/his immediate family, she/he is expected to promptly disclose that fact to her/his Service/Section Chief and to make an appropriate transfer of supervisory authority.
13. Accepting personal gifts in violation of the ACH Gifts policy.
14. Requesting that individuals they supervise perform personal favors.
15. Misappropriating ACH property or resources for personal business, including electronic devices.

By signing below you accept and agree to follow this code of conduct.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

This document has been reviewed and approved by the Medical Staff Leadership, the ACH Physicians Leadership Council, and the Medical Staff Executive Committee.