EXCLUSION FROM PATIENT CARE

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish a mechanism by which an employee may request to be excused from participating in an aspect of a patient's care or treatment in situations where the prescribed care or treatment presents a conflict with the employee's cultural values, sense of ethics, or religious beliefs. In no instance will the mission of the organization be compromised. Treatment and care will be provided to all persons in need without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, or ability to pay.

II. Policy:

A. It is understood that situations may arise in which the prescribed course of treatment or care for a patient may be in conflict with the personal values or religious beliefs of a staff member. In such situations, it is the responsibility of the employee to immediately notify his/her supervisor or department head of his/her concerns and to request that he/she be excused from participating in a particular aspect of treatment/care of the patient. The supervisor or department head will make a decision on the request. As permitted by the situation, this request must be committed to writing as soon as reasonably possible and must include the specific aspects of care from which the employee is requesting to be excused and the reasons for making the request.

B. The requesting employee is responsible for providing appropriate patient care until alternate arrangements can be made. Refusal to provide care will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. In no circumstances will a request be granted if it is felt that doing so would negatively affect the care of the patient.

C. It must be realized that for reasons of staffing limitations, it may not be possible to grant a request. Employees may request a transfer to a department or position in which conflict of care issues are less likely to occur.

D. Examples of patient care situations which may be in conflict with a staff member's cultural values, sense of ethics, or religious beliefs include abortions, use of blood products, decisions not to resuscitate or use other life sustaining procedures or technology.

I. Procedure:

A. Requests by employees for accommodations in the delivery of patient care as a result of an employee's personal values and/or beliefs are to be made to his/her supervisor or department head. The supervisor or department head will discuss the request with the Human Resources Department. Requests will be forwarded to the Hospital Ethics Committee as appropriate.

B. The hospital will attempt to make reasonable accommodations for all justified employee requests for exclusion from patient care or treatment resulting from a conflict with the employee's personal values or beliefs.

*THIS POLICY SUPERSEDES PREVIOUS SITE POLICIES