

**PHYSICIAN SERVICES DIVISION**  
**OFFICE OF ADVANCED PRACTICE PROVIDERS**  
Student Educational Experience  
Orientation Handbook



**UPMC** LIFE  
CHANGING  
MEDICINE

## **Physician Services Division (PSD) Student Experience Services**

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Office hours are from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. We are located in Forbes Tower, Suite 9048, 200 Lothrop St., Pittsburgh, PA 15213.

## **Welcome**

This orientation handbook was created for volunteers and externs, and will help you become a successful member of UPMC. Our goal is to not only provide quality care to everyone who enters our doors, but also help people in any way that we can while we are here. Extraordinary service is our philosophy and our mission. We believe it is what our patients deserve and what our physicians, staff members, externs, and volunteers want to give.

Whatever your assignment it is an important contribution to the quality service we deliver to our patients. This handbook is essential and important that you understand our policies, procedures, and programs so that you can provide the best service possible.

## **Mission and Vision of UPMC**

UPMC is creating a new economic future for western Pennsylvania — a future built on new ways of thinking about health care and sparked by leveraging the uniqueness of the integrated health enterprise.

These values and principles guide the health system in achieving its mission and vision:

- We consider our people to be our greatest asset and we seek to be responsive to the needs of individuals of all backgrounds.
- We strive for excellence in everything we do and believe that each member of the faculty and staff is responsible for the continuous improvement of quality in all aspects of the services we provide.
- We are committed to understanding and satisfying the expectations and requirements of our customers.
- We strive to provide an environment that supports and encourages the active leadership and participation of physicians throughout the system and fosters collaboration among health care professionals across programs and service lines.
- We support a culture that embraces change and encourages innovation.
- We pursue organizational integration in order to achieve the highest and best use of the system's collective resources.
- As stewards of the community's resources we seek to operate in an efficient and effective manner in order to maintain financial strength and carry out the organization's mission as well as to contribute to the economic stability and growth of the region.
- As the only academic medical system in western Pennsylvania, UPMC shares with local, state, and national governments the responsibility for health and safety of our community, including crisis intervention.

## **UPMC: “Best of the Best”**

UPMC is the premier health system in western Pennsylvania and one of the most renowned academic medical centers in the United States. Today, with more than 55,000 employees, UPMC comprises 20 hospitals and a network of other sites across western PA and throughout the world: doctor’s offices, cancer centers, outpatient treatment centers, specialized imaging and surgery facilities, in-home care, rehabilitation sites, behavioral health care, and nursing homes.

### **Assignment**

Human Resources is committed to providing equal opportunity for all applicants who are on-site at UPMC. This includes the acceptance, training, and assignment regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, veteran status, genetics, veteran status, sexual orientation, familial status, gender, age, marital status, disability or any other legally protected group status. Acceptance decisions will be made solely upon the basis of qualifications as related to the requirements of the position.

It is very important that externs work within the guidelines of their job description to assure their own safety and the safety of our customers.

### **Commitment**

Since externs make a commitment of support to the patient and staff, they must be reliable. We ask that you commit yourself to punctuality and regular attendance.

### **Communication**

Communication is the key to a successful and rewarding experience. Talk to your supervisor if you feel uncertain or uncomfortable about something or just have a question. Complaints and suggestions are welcomed and should be brought to the attention of Human Resources.

### **Confidentiality/HIPAA**

Patients within UPMC have the right to privacy concerning their medical care, nature of illness, financial status, or family affairs.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) sets a national standard to protect medical records and other personal health information.

HIPAA allows us to share patient information for:

**Treatment:** providing care to patients.

**Payment:** getting paid for caring for patients.

**Operations:** normal business activities such as quality improvement, training, auditing, customer service, and resolution of grievances.

If use of this information does not fall under one of these categories (TPO) you must have the patient's signed authorization before sharing that information with anyone.

Patient information is only for healthcare workers, volunteers, and externs who have a need, reason, and permission for access. Confidentiality should be maintained for all patient information whether written, verbal, or electronic. This is called Protected Health Information (PHI). Confidentiality goes beyond releasing information about patients that we do not know. Ninety-nine percent of all incidents involving breach of patient confidentiality are innocent and most are the result of "shop talk."

It is natural for us to talk about our work at the hospital, but confidentiality is necessary even when you see an acquaintance in for tests or as a patient. This information should not be repeated to your family, friends, or family members of the patient without the patient's permission. Also, if you notice someone you know listed as a patient on the census or computer, it does not give you permission to visit or contact that person. Only when the patient or a family member informs you that he/she is in the hospital may you visit without violating confidentiality.

When accessing the computer, do not share your password with others. Never leave your terminal while confidential patient information is displayed on the computer screen, and always sign off your terminal at the end of your task. Also, never leave any papers with patient information out for others to see. Dispose of patient information in appropriate shredding bins, never in an open wastebasket.

The legal implications of violating patients' rights can bring damage not only to the hospital, but also to the person who breached confidentiality. A patient whose confidentiality has been breached can bring a lawsuit against the hospital, as well as against the employee or volunteer/extern, resulting in fines or imprisonment.

It is the duty of every volunteer/extern and staff member to remember their commitment to patients and not to breach confidentiality. Failure to abide by the hospital confidentiality policies will result in termination.

It is everyone's responsibility to report violations, or wrong doings. Whether someone received patient information improperly, or shared patient information in the wrong way, everyone has a responsibility to report violations. When in doubt ... ASK.

Because of patient confidentiality policies, staff in the Volunteer/HR Department do not have access to the patient census. Therefore, if you are a patient in the hospital and want the Volunteer/HR office to know, please have a family member contact us. Also, we are unable to give out addresses and/or home phone numbers to staff and volunteers/externs.

## **Customer Service**

The customer is anyone with whom you interact on the job— patients, families, visitors, all other employees, physicians, vendors, and the general public—everyone. All deserve the same level of respectful, courteous treatment as you would wish for yourself and your loved ones.

A first impression may stay with a customer for a long time. To a person who has never been to a UPMC facility or has not used UPMC's services, his or her initial contact with a staff member or volunteer/extern will be their first impression of the medical center. Therefore, it is important to be proactive and greet customers in a friendly, helpful manner.

Our customers are our top priority at UPMC. Take note of how you and your co-workers greet customers in your work area and make an extra effort to greet everyone with a smile and positive attitude, initiate conversations, maintain eye contact, focus on the customer, and personally provide assistance. Efforts like these ensure service excellence and turn a customer's first impression into a lasting relationship.

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure customer satisfaction.

## **Customer Service Tips**

- Smile!
- Make eye contact and introduce yourself to patients.
- Help people who look lost.
- Listen to complaints. Do not try to reason, argue or be defensive.
- A calm demeanor shows maturity and professionalism. If the customer gets more than they expected, the end result is exceptional customer service.

## **Disciplinary Action/Termination**

If you do not satisfactorily perform your duties as a volunteer/extern, you will be counseled by your supervisor. In the event performance or behavior doesn't improve within a mutually agreed upon time frame you will receive further counseling and a written warning. Failure to meet these written expectations within the defined period of time will result in termination from the volunteer/extern program.

Volunteers/externs may be automatically dismissed from the program for the following reasons:

- Endangering the life of any patient, staff or visitor.
- Divulging confidential patient, employee, or volunteer/extern information.
- Stealing or embezzlement.
- Possession, sale, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs on UPMC premises.
- Unauthorized possession of firearms or other weapons.

## **Dignity & Respect**

Because UPMC recognizes the diversity of our workforce and the diverse populations we serve, UPMC is committed to an inclusive environment that respects everyone regardless of their race, gender, physical ability, age, ethnicity, or other characteristics. UPMC will strive to provide a workplace that is fair, equitable, and sensitive to individual differences.

It is becoming more and more evident that staff, like the rest of society, are no longer content to leave their culture at the door. They bring with them and are proud of their religions, ethnic, and racial backgrounds and their identities are shaped by gender and unique individual traits.

All UPMC staff are expected to work toward recognizing, respecting, and understanding staff differences and to appreciate the strengths found in diverse backgrounds. And because people from throughout the world come to us for health care, understanding diversity also is vital to providing service excellence and quality care for our patients.

## **Dress Code**

As volunteers/externs, you represent UPMC. Clothing should be appropriate, clean, neat, and in good condition.

- No shorts, miniskirts, blue jeans, t-shirts, sweat pants, sweatshirts, leggings or revealing clothing are permitted.
- Hats may not be worn unless for religious reasons.
- Identification badges should be attached.

## **Drug- Free Workplace**

It is the policy of UPMC to provide a drug- free work environment. Unlawful possession, distribution, or use of illegal drugs or alcohol on UPMC premises is prohibited. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Anyone convicted of a drug- related crime must report the conviction within five days to the Volunteer/HR Office.

## **Errands**

When going on an errand, please go directly to your destination and return promptly. Notify your supervisor when leaving the work area and upon returning.

## **Gratuities and Gifts**

UPMC volunteers/externs and staff members are prohibited from soliciting or accepting tips or gifts for services rendered. Please discourage the practice of gift giving by patients and visitors. People who wish to acknowledge special performance with a gift should be referred to UPMC Development grievance procedure.

Any volunteer/extern who considers him or herself unfairly treated or who has a grievance related to work problems, departmental policies, disciplinary action, or termination may appeal to the HR Office, which will investigate and issue a decision.

## **Harassment**

UPMC does not tolerate sexual or racial harassment. In the case of harassment corrective action cannot be taken unless the proper people have been informed. Anyone who feels mistreated in this manner is urged to contact Human Resources immediately for assistance. HR may dismiss volunteer/externs who mistreat others by sexual or racial harassment.

## **ID Badge**

In order for patients, visitors, and staff to recognize you as part of the “official” hospital family, you must wear a photo ID badge at all times when on duty. Badges should be clipped to the collar with your photo visible. You must also wear your badge in the cafeteria.

Volunteers/Externs are issued an authorization form to receive a UPMC ID badge upon receipt of their TB tests results.

Badges are issued by UPMC Human Resources at:

Forbes Tower, Sennot St., First Floor

ID badges must be returned to the HR office whenever your assignment is complete.



## **Illness While Volunteering/Externship**

For the safety and good health of both patients and yourself, please don't report for volunteer/extern duty if you are ill. Call the HR office, as well as the department in which you cover, to notify them you will not be in that day.

If you become ill while volunteering/externing at UPMC, you may seek treatment in the Emergency Department; however you will be responsible for the cost of the care you receive. Please notify your supervisor when leaving your assignment. We will notify your emergency contact if you choose or if necessary, will make arrangements for your transportation home.

## **Injury While on Duty**

To prevent injuries, it is your responsibility to know and consider your physical limitations and to decline tasks accordingly.

All UPMC volunteers/externs are covered by the hospital's accident insurance if injured while performing their assigned duties. Health care expenses related to the injury, which are not covered by your personal medical insurance, will be paid by the hospital. If you need follow-up care you may go to the health care provider of your choice. Here are a few important steps to remember:

- When injured (whether minor or major) notify your assigned supervisor immediately; if this is not possible call the HR office.
- If evaluation and/or treatment is necessary, go directly to, or be taken to the Emergency Department.
- Be sure to identify yourself as a hospital volunteer/extern to the Emergency Department (ED) staff. It is important for the ED staff to know that this is a hospital liability and not a workmen's compensation claim.
- If you receive a bill for treatment resulting from an injury while volunteering/externing take it to your coordinator.

A written note from your doctor must be presented authorizing your return to duty.

## **The Joint Commission**

The Joint Commission is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of care provided to the public.

Hospitals are surveyed by The Joint Commission every three years. Achieving accreditation means that an organization complies with The Joint Commission standards and continuously makes efforts to improve the care and services it provides.

## **Patients Rights**

Patients at UPMC hospitals have the right to:

- Have considerate and respectful care.
- Know the names of physicians coordinating their care.
- Receive information from their physician about their illness, course of treatment, and prospects for recovery, all in terms they can understand.
- Receive all the information they need about any proposed treatment or procedure. Receive written information about their rights under Pennsylvania State law to make health care decisions, including the right to accept or refuse treatment, and the right to execute advance directives.
- Receive information about the hospital's policy on implementation of advance directives.
- Participate actively in decisions regarding their medical care. To the extent permitted by law, this includes the right to refuse treatment.
- Full consideration or privacy concerning their medical care.
- Confidential treatment of all records pertaining to their care and stay in the hospital.
- Response to any reasonable request they may make for service.
- Leave the hospital against the advice of their physician.
- Reasonable continuity of care.
- Be advised if hospital/personal physician proposed to engage in or perform human experimentation affecting their care or treatment. They have the right to refuse to participate in such research projects.
- Be informed of their continuing health care requirements following their discharge from the hospital.
- Examine and receive an explanation of their bill.
- Know which rules and policies apply to their conduct as a patient.
- Have all patient rights apply to the person who may have legal responsibility to make decisions regarding medical care on their behalf.

## **Quality Improvement**

The primary goal of the Quality Improvement process at UPMC is to promote and reinforce a culture of continuous improvement. This is important so that the hospital can improve clinical, service, and cost outcomes. Every employee and volunteer/extern needs to recognize his or her individual role in the continuous improvement process.

The success of the overall process of patient care depends on each employee and volunteer/extern doing his/her own assignment as accurately, timely, and as cost effectively as possible.

Volunteers/externs should be aware of the quality improvement efforts made in their department. Talk with your supervisor if you are not familiar with the quality improvement work in your department. What is your department working to improve? What accomplishments have been made to date?

Quality improvement is everyone's job!

## **Resignation**

If for some reason you are unable to continue in the Volunteer/Extern Program please notify your supervisor and HR office. You must return your ID badge.

## **Sign-in**

You are to sign in each day before reporting to your assignment. At the end of each assignment you must sign out. You should not sign in and out simultaneously.

It is of utmost importance that the sign-in procedure be followed. We need this record to locate you in case of an emergency, to compute your hours, and to document your presence in the event of an insurance claim. Sign-in time should reflect actual starting time because insurance coverage starts when you sign in.

If you volunteer/extern before or after office hours, on weekends, or at an off-site location, you should sign in and out at an alternative location designated by your coordinator.

## **Smoking**

UPMC is a "No Smoking Facility." All UPMC hospitals, facilities, and grounds, including parking lots and garages, are smoke-free as of July 1, 2007.

## **Solicitation and Distribution of Literature**

No volunteer/extern, staff member, or outsider is permitted to solicit funds, sell articles, or distribute literature (other than that produced by UPMC) on hospital property.

## **TB Tests**

Tuberculosis (TB) is an airborne disease and is transmitted by breathing contaminated air. Active TB is the presence of signs/symptoms (cough, fever, night sweats, loss of appetite, and weight loss) and a positive TB skin test, chest x-ray, and/or AFB smear.

All volunteers/externs must have a TB test prior to beginning their assignment.

## **Telephones**

When answering the telephone, greet the person by giving the name of your assigned area followed by your first name. When making a phone call within the hospitals, use the last five digits of the phone number.

Do not use phones in your assigned area for personal calls except in the case of an emergency. Also, please do not ask your family/friends to call you at your assigned area. All cell phones must be turned off while in the hospital. Pagers must be in vibrate or silent mode.

## **Termination of Services**

UPMC reserves the right to terminate the services of a volunteer/extern if such action is in the medical center's best interest or if a volunteer/extern fails to comply with UPMC rules. You do have the right to an opportunity to respond. The following actions will result in immediate dismissal: physical abuse, intoxication, theft, and breach of confidentiality. Upon termination the volunteer/extern must return his/her identification badge.

## **Vacation**

Please notify the HR office of your vacation plans, as well as the department in which you volunteer.

## **Emergencies and Fire Safety**

### **Elevators**

If riding an elevator and a fire alarm is announced for that building, get off on the nearest floor. Elevator shafts can become filled with super-heated gas and smoke during a fire, which would be very dangerous for anyone in an elevator car at that time. Do not use elevators to attempt to evacuate a fire.

## **Emergency Preparedness**

As a volunteer/extern of UPMC, it is important that you know how to respond in the unlikely event of an emergency, such as a fire, cardiac arrest, disaster, or failure of one of the hospital's critical operating systems. You should become familiar with the plan for emergencies and responsibilities of the department to which you are assigned. Drills are held periodically and you are expected to participate if you are on duty.

## **Disaster Plan**

A disaster includes any type of major fire or explosion, natural disaster, major accident, or civil unrest that endangers the lives of people. An internal disaster is a disaster that occurs within or on the medical center premises. An external disaster is one that causes injury to persons in the community.

The UPMC disaster plan enables staff to respond appropriately in the event of an emergency, whether internal or external.

As a volunteer/extern, you can help to provide prompt and effective service in the event of a disaster by becoming familiar with the functions assigned to your department in the event of a disaster, by participating in disaster drills when asked to do so, and by keeping calm and following directions.

## **Fire Safety**

It is the responsibility of UPMC staff members and volunteers/externs to prevent fires and to be prepared to act quickly and correctly should a fire occur. Volunteers/externs should learn the department fire plans for their assigned areas. The voice paging operator will announce a code to alert the staff to a fire emergency. Never shout "fire"; remain calm, and reassure patients and visitors.

### **The code for fire is Condition "F"**

If you discover a fire, follow the RACE procedure:

1. Rescue: Remove anyone in immediate danger from smoke or flames. If evacuation is necessary, use exits on the floor or stairwells. Do not use elevators.
2. Alarm: Sound the fire alarm. Don't hesitate. Pull the handle marked "PULL DOWN" on the fire alarm stations, located adjacent to stairwell doors. In addition, call the emergency number at Ext.7-3131 (Oakland) and Ext. 3-3131 (Shadyside). When the operator answers, give the building name and floor number.

3. Contain: Limit smoke by closing all doors and windows. Use wet towels under doors, if necessary, to prevent smoke from spreading. When a fire alarm is activated, fire doors in the main hallways are automatically closed until the “ALL CLEAR” code is announced. All areas of the hospital must comply when the alarm is sounded regardless of how close they are to the fire floor. Reassure patients everything is all right and the inconvenience will only be temporary.
4. Extinguish: Select and use the proper fire extinguisher until help arrives. Extinguish the fire only if it is safe to do so and you are not placing yourself in harm’s way until help arrives.

Fire extinguishers are effective only when used properly. Remember the acronym PASS for the steps in using an extinguisher:

Pull pin

Aim nozzle at base of fire

Squeeze extinguisher handle

Sweep nozzle from side to side

## **UPMC Codes**

To alert staff to certain emergencies without alarming patients and visitors, UPMC maintains a coding system used by the paging operators.

STAT: Means immediately at all hospitals

Condition A: A patient is in cardiac arrest. It alerts members of the cardiopulmonary resuscitation team to life-threatening situations.

Condition C: Called when a patient is in crisis and needs rapid evaluation and treatment or when a patient requires expedient transfer to a monitored bed or an ICU bed.

Condition F: Alerts staff to fire and indicates location.

Condition H: Addresses the needs of the patients in the case of any emergency or when the patient is unable to get the attention of a health care provider. This code will provide our patients and families an avenue to call for immediate help when they feel they are not receiving adequate medical attention in an emergent situation.

Condition L: Created to rapidly locate missing patients. This will mobilize hospital staff from across the facility for comprehensive, systematic search in rare cases when patients wander away from their units.

CODE BLUE: External disaster. Be alert when you hear these calls so that you can move away from the situation in order to let authorized personnel proceed with the emergency. If at all possible, please remove yourself from the area.

## **Safety**

It is everyone's responsibility to be alert for any unsafe or potentially unsafe condition or hazard. You should report these conditions to your supervisor, the HR office, or security.

## **Electrical Management**

Electrical safety is a very important topic in a hospital.

Equipment used within the hospital is periodically inspected for safety, and will have a preventive maintenance tag to indicate that it has met the safety standards. Do not use electrical equipment without such a tag.

All medical equipment brought in by patients and visitors must be inspected by Clinical Engineering prior to use. All electrically operated non-medical equipment brought in by patients and visitors has to be inspected by Maintenance prior to use.

In case of a power loss, the hospital uses an emergency generator to provide limited power to certain areas. Emergency power is provided to outlets that are red in color. It is important to plug only critical equipment into these red outlets.

## **Hazard Communication**

Hazard communication is a program designed to identify hazardous chemicals to which employees and volunteers/externs may be exposed during their workday. Its goal is to provide methods and training for safe use of hazardous materials, as well as follow-up in the event of an exposure incident.

## **Material Safety Data Sheets**

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are found in each department that uses hazardous chemicals. The MSDS contains all vital data relating to a hazardous chemical and product. This includes manufacturer information, emergency phone numbers, product name, symptoms and

dangers relating to acute (short-term) and chronic (long-term) exposure to material, spill cleanup procedures, and proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to be used.

## **Security**

Security guards are on duty around the clock and are stationed throughout key locations in the hospitals.

Presbyterian Ext. 7-3191

Mercy Ext. 2-7998

Passavant Ext. 8-5270

Shadyside Ext. 3-2990

CHP Ext. 2-5191

St. Margaret Ext. 4-4159

Security guards are available upon request to escort volunteers/externs to the parking garage after dark.

- If you should see any suspicious- looking person on hospital property, please contact security immediately. If possible give security a description of the person.
- If you witness any reportable incident concerning patients, visitors, staff, or volunteers/externs, please notify both security and HR.
- To minimize security risks, please do not bring valuables to the hospital with you. The hospitals are not responsible for stolen or lost items.
- Lost and Found is in the Security Office at each hospital.

## **Waste Management**

The Hospital's Waste Management Plan has been designed to help dispose of all wastes in a way that is safe for you, patients, employees, the community, and the environment.

- Bio-hazardous waste **MUST** be disposed in red hazardous waste containers.
- Sharp items, used or unused, are to be disposed in designated sharps containers only.
- Proper Personal Protective Equipment is to be used any time bio-hazardous waste is handled.

UPMC recycles aluminum and cardboard.

Proper segregation of wastes is vital to regulatory compliance, as well as cost containment. Red bag waste costs as much as seven times more than regular waste to dispose. All staff must pay attention and not put non-infectious materials into red bio-hazard bags.



## **Workplace Violence**

The typical image of workplace violence may be what is represented in the media, but it can encompass more than physical assault. It also includes verbal threats and verbal, physical, and sexual harassment.

UPMC has a “zero tolerance” for violence and has outlined methods to prevent escalation of violent incidents. It is up to each one of us to take measure to avoid or minimize the likelihood of violence. If you or someone you know becomes involved in a potentially violent situation, please let your supervisor know.

## **Patient Service Guidelines**

### **Age- Specific Competencies**

Age-specific competencies are skills that enable staff and volunteers to help care for individuals at every stage of life. Volunteers/Externs, as well as staff members, should be sensitive to these growth stages and treat patients accordingly. We all must remember that every patient has different physical impairments, learning abilities, cultural differences, emotional stresses, and language barriers.

Examples of age- specific care include:

- Encouraging young children to communicate by smiling or talking.
- Using toys or games to teach children or reduce fear in young children.
- Guiding teens in making positive lifestyle choices.
- Recognizing commitments to family, career, and community.
- Helping patients plan for a healthy/active retirement.
- Providing support to patients with age-related impairments.
- Supporting end-of-life decisions.

## **Communication**

The following are some tips for communicating with patients:

- Always knock before entering a patient’s room.
- Introduce yourself.
- Ask what the patient prefers to be called, for example Mr. Green or John.
- Do not call the patient “honey,” “grandma,” or “dear.”
- Look at the patient directly when speaking to them.
- Keep sentences short.

- Use simple words.
- Reduce any background noise, such as TV or radio.
- Provide privacy.
- Always leave the room at once if the physician comes in to see a patient.
- Do not sit on patient's bed.
- Do not give medical advice or recommend physicians to patients.
- Do not discuss patient's illness with the patient or visitors.
- Do not gossip with patients.
- Do not witness any documents for patients.
- If a patient or visitor voices a complaint, stay calm, don't get defensive, and if possible put a positive slant to situation.

## **Infection Control**

Using proper infection control practices is essential for your safety and to protect our patients. These practices often seem so basic that most individuals may not recognize the importance of tasks such as good hand washing in preventing the spread of infection.

The spread of infection can be prevented by:

Hand washing

Universal precautions

Isolation

## **Hand Washing**

Hand washing is the single most important and effective way of preventing the spread of infection. Volunteers/externs should wash their hands:

- Upon arrival to assignment.
- Before and after patient contact.
- After removing gloves.
- After coughing or sneezing into your hands.
- Before and after eating.
- After using restroom.
- Before leaving assignment for home.

You should wash your hands using warm water and soap for a minimum of 15 seconds. Let the water run while you dry your hands. After drying use a paper towel to turn off the water faucet. Another effective way of preventing the spread of infection is the laundering of your uniform.

## **Universal/Standard Precautions**

Universal Precautions requires that we treat the blood and body fluids of all persons as if they are infectious. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as gloves are provided to protect you from exposure to blood or other body fluids. If you get blood and/or body fluids on you:

- Immediately wash the part of your body that the blood or fluid is on.
- Immediately report the incident to your supervisor who will in turn contact Infection Control. If it is after hours, report the incident to the Emergency Department, also notify HR.

Very few volunteers/externs involve contact with blood or bodily fluids. If you have questions about the need for PPE in your assignment ask your supervisor or HR representative.

All liquids on floors, counters, or chairs should be treated as contaminated fluid. Do not attempt to clean up spills yourself. Notify your supervisor or HR representative who in turn will call Environmental Services to clean.

## **Isolation**

In certain circumstances, precautions above and beyond Universal Precautions are needed.

There are four types of isolation that may be encountered at UPMC:

Respiratory Isolation: Prevents the transmission of airborne infections, such as tuberculosis.

Strict Isolation: Is used to prevent the transmission of highly communicable diseases, such as chickenpox, and disseminated herpes zoster.

Direct Patient Precautions: Prevents the transmission of resistant organisms through direct contact, such as MRSA and VRE.

Droplet Precautions: Prevents the transmission of highly communicable infections spread by droplets, such as bacterial meningitis and influenza.

NEVER enter rooms marked "Isolation." Always check at the nurse's station if you are unsure regarding a sign posted near the patient's room.

## **Lab Specimens**

Specimens **MUST** be placed in a zip lock bag before transporting. Volunteers/externs **SHOULD NOT** transport specimens that are **IMPROPERLY** sealed. Rubber gloves should **NOT** be used to transport specimens.

## **PATIENT SAFETY – Mandatory Reporting of Incidents and Serious Events**

Any employee or volunteer/extern who reasonably believes that a serious event or incident has occurred must report the serious event to Linda Conroy, Patient Safety Officer at 412.623.2480. This oral or written report must be made immediately, but in no event later than 24 hours after the occurrence or discovery of the serious event.

- A. No Retaliation: Any employee or volunteer/extern who reports an occurrence of a serious event shall not be subject to any retaliatory action for reporting the serious event.
- B. Failure to report: Any employee or volunteer/extern who fails to report a serious event may be subject to discipline up to and including suspension.
- C. Limitation: This mandatory reporting policy shall not limit management's ability to take appropriate disciplinary action against any employee or volunteer/extern for failure to meet defined performance expectations or to take corrective action against a licensee for unprofessional conduct, including making a false report or failing to report a serious event.
- D. Notification to licensing boards: If management discovers that a licensee providing health care services in a medical facility failed to report a serious event, management shall notify the licensee's licensing board of the failure to report.

## **Definitions**

**Incident:** An event, occurrence, or situation involving the clinical care of a patient in a medical facility which could have injured the patient but did not cause injury or require the delivery of additional health care services to the patient.

**Licensee:** An individual who is licensed or certified by the state of PA to provide professional services, or employed by or authorized to provide professional services in a medical facility.

## **Patient Safety Precautions**

In the instances listed below, a patient's needs should be met only by a trained professional familiar with their treatment. At these times you can help by calling a nurse.

- Ask a nurse before you give anything to eat or drink to a patient.
- Never give medication.
- Never help lift or carry a patient.
- Never give service to an isolation patient.
- Never help a patient in or out of a wheelchair.
- Never give a bedpan or urinal.

## **Restricted Areas**

Certain areas of the hospital are posted as restricted areas. Only those volunteers/externs whose duties require them to enter these areas may do so.

## **Wheelchair Safety**

- You are not permitted to help a patient in or out of a wheelchair or in or out of bed.
- Always identify yourself.
- Always identify the patient.
- Always engage both brakes and lift the foot rests out of the way.
- Make the patient comfortable.
- For in-patients, place a blanket or sheet across lap.
- Always back a wheelchair into an elevator or over any bumps.
- Never leave a patient unattended in a wheelchair without notifying an employee in the department to which the patient was transported.
- Always stay with a patient who is being discharged until a family member arrives.

**Please print your name, sign, and date below to confirm that you have read the PSD Orientation Handbook.**

**I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the PSD Orientation Handbook and will abide by all terms and conditions outlined therein.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Print Name**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date**