



**St. Elizabeth**  
HEALTHCARE

# **ENSURING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

# Patient's Rights

Our patients have certain rights, as required by law and the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services. We attempt to communicate these rights to patients and their family members in a manner that the patient can best understand.

St. Elizabeth patients have the right to receive care in a safe setting, free from mental, physical, sexual or verbal abuse and neglect, exploitation or harassment.

# Patient's Rights (cont.)

Among other things, patients have the right to voice complaints and concerns without fear of retaliation, to the department where services are being rendered, as well as to ask to speak to:

- the immediate health caregiver
- department manager or director
- nursing shift supervisor
- or contact the Risk Management office

**See Patient's Rights and Responsibilities Policy, ACORP-P-03 for detail.**

# Every Hospital Associate is Required to know:

- The definition of abuse
- That it is required by Kentucky law to report *any* instance where he/she believes
  - abuse has occurred or
  - someone has alleged that abuse has occurred
- How to report abuse



# Abuse is:

**The willful and  
unjustified infliction of**

- pain
- injury
- unreasonable  
confinement
- intimidation
- and/ or punishment



**Resulting in**

- physical harm
- mental anguish
- or deprivation of  
necessary goods and  
services

# Abuse Takes Many Forms

- **Emotional**- Verbal or nonverbal acts that inflict pain, anguish or distress
  - Ex: Isolating or ignoring the individual, cursing or insulting the individual, threatening with punishment
- **Physical**- Actual physical force resulting in injury, impairment or pain, or the threat of such force
  - For example: Hitting, slapping, pushing, shoving, shaking or force feeding



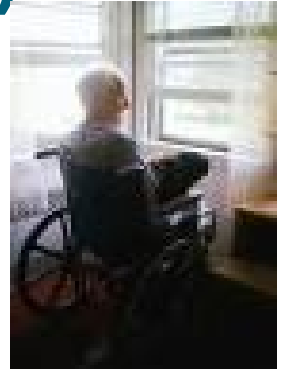
# Abuse Takes Many Forms

- **Verbal** – the use of oral, written or gestured language that willfully includes derogatory terms to or about the person
  - For example: Threats of harm or threats intended to frighten
- **Mental**- The use of behaviors intended to humiliate, harass, punish or deprive the person and produce fear.



# Abuse Takes Many Forms (cont)

- **Neglect**- Failure of a person who has or has assumed legal responsibility for the care of another to provide proper care, food, shelter, etc. necessary to maintain reasonable physical and/or mental health.
- Ex: Inadequate food or fluids, delay or denial of medical care, improper hygiene, physical restraint, or lack of assistance with mobility, improper clothing, etc.



- **Self-Neglect**- The individual fails to provide for their own health & safety



# Abuse Takes Many Forms (cont)



- **Sexual-** Sexual contact without consent
  - Ex: Coerced nudity, fondling or touching, sexual assault, exposing to pornographic pictures or stories
- **Financial Exploitation-** Illegal or improper use of assets, funds or property through deception, intimidation or undue influence
  - Ex: Stealing property or funds, forging a signature or soliciting donations, using a charge card or charge card number, cashing a check, etc. when not authorized with the intention of permanently depriving the owner



# Recognizing the Signs of Abuse

- Argument or tension between caregiver and patient
- Sudden changes in personality or behavior
- Agitation, apathy, withdrawal
- Rocking motions
- Inadequate/improper clothing
- Untreated medical conditions
- Dehydration/malnutrition
- Symmetric injuries on both sides of the body
- Bite marks
- Restraint marks
- Bed sores
- Dirty, unbathed, poor oral hygiene, foul odors

# Burnout

- Burnout can be a causative factor in abuse. When a caregiver, paid caregiver or family member, experiences burnout there is reduced ability to cope with the stress of caregiving
- **Signs of Burnout:**
  - ✓ Apathy, laziness, lack of caring
  - ✓ Chronic feelings of being sick or fatigued
  - ✓ Feelings of guilt or helplessness
  - ✓ Frustrations with job or co-workers or person caring for
  - ✓ Blaming others for mistakes, defensiveness, judgmental
  - ✓ Withdrawal, unapproachable, not provide needed care
  - ✓ Working harder but with fewer successes

# Avoiding Burnout

When you recognize these behaviors in yourself or in someone else, it is time to ask for help from a supervisor

- ✓ Know your limits and work within those limits
- ✓ Request additional help
- ✓ Feel comfortable with yourself
- ✓ Take time each day for you
- ✓ Change the things you can and accommodate to those you can't
- ✓ Organize and prioritize
- ✓ Develop an active personal life; build a support system
- ✓ Maintain good communication with others

# Managing Difficult Behaviors

**Difficult patient behaviors can contribute to occurrences of abuse. Here are some simple, but NOT EASY, tips for managing difficult behaviors in patients, families, or co-workers**

- Avoidance is damaging – just confront the conflict
- Move to a private venue - acknowledge your willingness to talk but not in public
- Don't react – take time to think and remain focused on identifying the patient's needs
- Don't take it personally
- Permit expression of negative feelings to reduce intensity
- Don't make assumptions – clarify and paraphrase what you hear

# Managing Difficult Behaviors (cont.)

- Attack the problem, not the person; detach feelings you have about the person presenting the problem
- Communicate directly and use I statements [not 'you']
- Try to identify the person's needs and look for a common interest
- Discuss the situation with team members and formulate an action plan
- When necessary with violent or aggressive individuals DIAL 12270 and ask for assistance

# Reporting Abuse

If you, as a Non-clinical Associate (Volunteer, admissions clerk, housekeeper, etc.) witness any kind of abuse, suspect abuse, or even hear of alleged abuse, you are **required by law** to-

- Report the situation **immediately** to the supervisor and/or nurse assigned to care for the patient
- The supervisor then takes responsibility for reporting the situation to the State Office of the Inspector General (OIG)

# Reporting Abuse

- If the actual or suspected physical or sexual abuse of a patient is believed to have been committed by an associate or is believed to have been committed on St. Elizabeth property, the supervisor will also contact Risk Management
- If the patient appears to be in imminent danger the patient will be removed from this potential harm and all steps taken to both report the abuse and to protect the patient



# Creating a Safe Environment

St. Elizabeth does not:

- condone or ignore
  - violence
  - sexual misconduct
  - harassment
- blame the victim
- withhold support from or permit retaliation against those who bring such concerns to our attention.

# Harassment

- St. Elizabeth is committed to maintaining a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity.
- Each associate has the right to work/volunteer free from discriminatory practices, including harassment of any person by an individual or group, including, but not limited to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability and/or any otherwise protected activity.

**See Harassment Policy HR-ER-o6 for detailed information.**

# Harassment

- Harassment (including sexual harassment) is:
  - Any behavior that is not welcome
  - is personally offensive
- Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's race, gender, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, disability or any other legally protected status **will not be tolerated.**
- Any associate/volunteer who believes he or she is the victim of harassment or discrimination should
  - Report the incident using the three-step Corporate Compliance process
    - A prompt and thorough investigation will be conducted

# Workplace Violence

- St. Elizabeth works to maintain a healthy, safe, and caring environment for all associates and volunteers.
- Are committed to providing a work environment free from threat or harm.
- There is a zero-tolerance policy for workplace violence, verbal and non-verbal threats, and related actions.

**Refer to policy HR-ER-12 -“Prevention of Workplace Violence”**

# Workplace Violence

- Is defined as any physical assault, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse occurring in the workplace
- St. Elizabeth is committed to providing a work environment free from threat or harm – have a policy that prohibits workplace violence.
- Be aware that violence toward associates/volunteers could come from multiple sources
  - Visitors
  - Associates/Volunteers
  - Patients

For additional guidelines, refer to policy HR-ER-12 - “Prevention of Workplace Violence”

# Workplace Violence

## STAY ALERT FOR

### Potential warning signs from patients, co-workers, visitors or others

- Pacing
- Suspicious of the environment
- Changes in posture
- Changes in tone of voice
- Irritability
- Restlessness
- Under high personal stress/home problems
- Poor response to criticism
- Intimidating attitude
- Loud or aggressive outburst – verbal or actions

# Response

- Remain calm
- Be aware of your posture, gestures, tone of voice, speed of speech.
- Keep communication simple, supportive, positive and direct.
- Use de-escalation techniques when speaking.
- Don't argue; speak calmly and with respect.
- Keep 1.5 to 3 feet of personal space between you and the violent individual



**KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
KEEP  
DISTANCE**

# Reporting

## In all cases of Workplace Violence

- If you feel immediately threatened – call Security at 12270
- Notify your Manager/Supervisor.
- Never assume that someone else has reported it.
- The St. Elizabeth Workplace Violence Incident Report Form must be filled out



# Safe Environment

- St. Elizabeth Healthcare is committed to providing a Safe Environment for our patients, associates and volunteers.
- Report any concerns you have immediately
- If you have any questions, please contact Volunteer Services.

# Safe Environment Review

1. You are required by law to report witnessed, suspected or alleged abuse.
  - A. True
  - B. False

# Safe Environment Review

2. The hospital must immediately file a report with which of the following outside agencies
  - A. Senior Services of Northern Kentucky
  - B. Northern Kentucky Area Development District
  - C. State Office of the Inspector General
  - D. Elder Maltreatment Alliance

# Safe Environment Review

3. Improper use of physical or chemical restraints, rough handling during caregiving, force-feeding and shaking are all examples of what type of abuse:
- A. Self neglect**
  - B. Financial abuse**
  - C. Emotional abuse**
  - D. Physical abuse**

# Safe Environment Review

4. A verbal or nonverbal act that inflicts pain, anguish or distress is what type of abuse?
- A. Neglect**
  - B. Physical abuse**
  - C. Emotional abuse**
  - D. Sexual abuse**

# Safe Environment Review

5. You are in the room of a confused older adult. You find a ten-dollar bill on the bedside table. Because of the person's confusion, you know they won't miss it and you take the money. This is an example of what type of abuse?
- A. Emotional abuse**
  - B. Financial abuse/Misappropriation of property**
  - C. Physical abuse**
  - D. Neglect**

# Safe Environment Review

6. An older patient is admitted. He is dirty and appears malnourished. It is cold outside but he has on summer clothing that is badly stained with urine. He is weak. You know that he lives alone and appears not to have any relatives involved with his care. You might suspect that he is the victim of which type of abuse?

- A. Neglect**
- B. Physical abuse**
- C. Self-Neglect**
- D. Sexual abuse**

# Safe Environment Review

7. Burnout may be a causative factor in abuse. Which of the following are signs of burnout?
- A. Apathy, laziness and lack of caring**
  - B. Frustration with the job/caregiving and others**
  - C. Blaming others for own mistakes**
  - D. Working harder but succeeding less**
  - E. All of the above**



# Safe Environment Review

8. Dealing with difficult behavior can also contribute to abuse. When dealing with difficult behavior it is best to:
- A. Not react but give yourself time to think and focus**
  - B. Move to a private place**
  - C. Confront the emotions of the issue**
  - D. Don't take it personally**
  - E. All of the above**

# Safe Environment Review

9. Tips for handling burnout include:
- A. Organize and prioritize time and tasks**
  - B. Make time for yourself daily**
  - C. Maintain good communication with others**
  - D. Develop an active personal life; build a support system**
  - E. All of the above**

# Safe Environment Review

10. Workplace violence is defined as?
- A. Physical assault**
  - B. Threatening behavior**
  - C. Verbal abuse**
  - D. All of the above**

# Safe Environment Review

11. St. Elizabeth has a policy that prohibits workplace violence?

**A. True**

**B. False**

# Safe Environment Review

12. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's race, gender, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, disability or any other legally protected status will not be tolerated.

**A. True**

**B. False**

# Safe Environment Review

13. Which one of the following is not a warning sign of workplace violence?
- A. Pacing**
  - B. Suspicious of the environment**
  - C. Firm handshake**
  - D. Changes in tone of voice**

# Safe Environment Review

14. When dealing with a potentially violent individual, you should try to:
- A. Remain calm**
  - B. Don't argue, speak calmly and with respect**
  - C. Keep 1.5 to 3 feet of space between you and the individual**
  - D. All of the above**

# Safe Environment Review

15. If you are a victim of workplace violence, you need to immediately report it to your supervisor or if necessary Security?
- A. True**
  - B. False**



# Safe Environment Review

16. I have reviewed the material contained in this Safe Environment presentation and I understand and agree to abide by these policies.

**A. Yes**

**B. No**