

HARBOR-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER

**SUBJECT: STAFF REQUEST(S) REGARDING PATIENT CARE POLICY NO: 224**

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**PURPOSE:**

To provide guidance in assisting a workforce member's right to refuse to participate in an aspect of patient care that conflicts with his/her cultural values, ethics, or religious beliefs. To ensure patient care is not compromised when a workforce member exercises that right.

**POLICY:**

A workforce member who objects to a work assignment because of cultural values, personal ethics or religious beliefs may address his/her concerns through the Staff Request Procedure.

Staff requests regarding patient care are subordinate to the hospital's responsibility to provide quality patient-centered care as mandated by the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center Mission Statement.

Hospital staff scheduling and individual work assignments are made in the best interest of patient-centered care. Related skills and skill mix of staff are deemed essential to providing safe and effective patient care. Qualified staff are hired and assigned to work in compliance with non-discrimination laws and hospital policy.

This policy shall be provided to, and reviewed with staff during Hospital-Wide Orientation.

**PROCEDURE:**

A. Staff Education

1. Managers and supervisors will communicate information regarding Staff Request Policy, job expectations, staffing patterns and critical aspects of patient-centered care as part of the pre-employment process.
2. Staff Request Policy and Procedure will be included in Hospital-Wide Orientation.
3. At the time of Department/Unit Orientation, the workforce member will be informed of the specific scope of practice for that department/unit and the Staff Request Policy.

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**EFFECTIVE DATE: 09/99**

**SUPERSEDES:**

**REVISED: 02/99, 08/10, 02/14, 07/17**

**REVIEWED: 02/99, 01/02, 10/04, 06/06, 02/14, 07/17**

**REVIEWED COMMITTEE: N/A**

**APPROVED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Kim McKenzie, RN, MSN, CPHQ**  
Chief Executive Officer

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**Anish Mahajan, MD**  
Chief Medical Officer

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**Patricia Soltero Sanchez, RN, BSN, MAOM**  
Chief Nursing Officer

Signature(s) on File.

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4. Staff have an opportunity to refuse to participate in an aspect of patient care. A staff member is required to submit a Situation Report Form explaining his/her request regarding patient care in advance of the need for participation.
5. The workforce member may not refuse to participate in an aspect of care, treatment or service at the time or just before the time to perform the treatment, procedure, or service.
6. A request to refuse to participate in a specific aspect of care, treatment, or service may be denied in an emergency situation where there is no other alternative or qualified person available to provide the care or when the life of a patient is in immediate jeopardy.
7. While the request is being considered, the workforce member must be relieved of the duty to perform the particular aspect of care, treatment or service in question.
8. Each supervisor must carefully determine the validity of any workforce member request and evaluate if accommodation can be made. The supervisor may request documentation from the employee to support his/her objection to the aspect of care, treatment, or service.
  - a. The supervisor is responsible to see that patient care is not adversely impacted by accommodating a staff request, including a request made at the moment of care.
  - b. If accommodation is made, the supervisor will ensure an alternate method of patient-centered care delivery.
  - c. The supervisor's response will be documented on the Situation Report Form with a copy provided to the workforce member. Copies will be maintained in the department, the original document will be filed in the Employee's Official Personnel Folder.
9. All staff rights' decisions will reflect the hospital's responsibility to provide safe and effective patient care.
10. If an accommodation cannot be made, the workforce member will be asked to continue with the care, treatment or service. Any problems or conflicts that arise during this process may be referred to the County Equal Employment Opportunity Program or County Counsel, as appropriate.

**REFERENCES:**

California Business & Professions Code, §733(b) (3)  
Joint Commission, Human Resources Standards HR.01.04.01