

HARBOR-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER

SUBJECT: PATIENT BEDS AND SIDE RAILS

POLICY NO. 434

PURPOSE:

To provide preventive maintenance procedures to ensure bed and side rail safety.

POLICY:

At Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, all personnel must follow the policies on bed and side rail safety.

PROCEDURE:

A. BEDS

All electrically operated patient beds will have an annual preventive maintenance procedure coordinated by Facilities Management. This preventive maintenance program includes testing to assure the existence of a proper electrical grounding pathway, and that there are no mechanical defects. Electrically operated patient beds will not have excessively long cords that could create a tripping hazard, or become shorted out as a result of pinching by the bed mechanism.

B. SIDE RAILS, HEAD AND FOOT BOARDS

All beds will be supplied with the proper side rails, head and foot boards, as appropriate.

C. USE OF SIDE RAILS

Potential benefits include:

- Providing a hand-hold for getting into or out of bed
- Providing a feeling of comfort and security
- Reducing the risk of patients falling out of bed or gurneys when being transported
- Providing easy access to bed controls

Potential risks of side rails include:

- More serious injury of falls when patients attempt to climb over rails
- Feeling isolated or unnecessarily restricted
- Preventing patients, who are able to get out of bed from performing routine activities such as going to the bathroom or retrieving something from their bedside table

Split side rails should be positioned so that at least one of the rails remains lowered.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 10/95

SUPERSEDES:

REVISED: 12/98, 1/02, 2/05, 10/06, 1/14, 1/17

REVIEWED: 12/98, 1/02, 10/06, 1/14, 1/17

REVIEWED COMMITTEE:

APPROVED BY:

Kim McKenzie, RN, MSN, CPHQ
Chief Executive Officer

Anish Mahajan, MD
Chief Medical Officer

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