



Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: MANAGEMENT OF PATIENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Policy No.: B807
Supersedes: May 9, 2016
Revision Date: September 12, 2022
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PURPOSE:

To recognize substance abuse/drug dependency as a primary diagnosis for which an appropriate treatment plan is required.

To assist patients to cope with their drug dependency such that they can most effectively comply with required medical treatment, and to reduce drug seeking behaviors.

To provide a consistent and predictable response to behavioral changes due to substance abuse and other violations of Rancho policies and/or laws. (See Policy No. A402 for "Handling of Intoxicated Visitors.")

POLICY:

A patient's use of any non-prescribed drug, over-the-counter medication, or illicit psychoactive substance, including alcohol, shall be considered substance abuse. Such use places the patient at grave risk for unpredictable medical and/or behavioral reactions and endangers the well-being of that patient, other patients and/or Rancho staff. Substance Abuse frequently affects the patient's ability to comply with care required to effectively treat their admitting diagnosis. In addition, it frequently results in the use of significant resources to address the resulting patient behavior.

Signs and symptoms of substance abuse may be present with changes in physical parameters, sensorium or behavior.

- a. Physical signs and symptoms may include changes in pulse rate, respiration, or blood pressure, and/or dilated or constricted pupils, staggering gait, and/or diaphoresis.
- b. Changes in sensorium may include lethargy, hyper alertness, slurred speech, and confusion with disorientation.
- c. Behavioral changes may include agitation, irritability, lability of mood and affect, increased reactivity to stimuli, negativism, hostile or threatening behavior, and combativeness.
- d. Patient observed with drug using paraphernalia or substances in their possession

Appropriate and available treatment to assist the patient in addressing their drug use will be offered to the patient.

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 1, 1993

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES • DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

APPROVED BY:

Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center will comply with any associated civil and criminal codes and appropriate law enforcement actions.

GUIDELINES:

PRE-ADMISSION

1. If the patient has a known current or recent history of or diagnosis of substance abuse the Case Management Nurse or Community Liaison Nurse is to provide to the patient the following prior to discharge from the referring facility:
 - a. The Consent Form for Urine **or Blood Drug Screen at the discretion of and frequency defined by the Physician** (see attached). The patient is requested to sign the document. The Rehabilitation Specialist Nurse will provide the form to Rancho at the time of the patient's admission.
 - b. Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center guideline and the Unit Rules/Guidelines for the unit to which the patient will be admitted.
2. If the patient declines to sign the Consent Form, this information will be provided to the physician or person who is screening the patient for admission. Declining to sign the consent form will not in itself be a reason for not accepting the patient for admission, but will be used as a part of the information by which the admission decision will be made.

ADMISSION

1. Appropriate treatment to assist the patient in coping with his drug dependence will be provided which may include treatment for possible drug withdrawal.
2. Psychology and Clinical Pharmacy consultation and other resources will be utilized in an effort to most effectively enable the patient to cope with their drug dependence and comply with required medical treatment.
3. When symptoms from the above list under Policy are noted by a member of the health team and assessed to be due to probable substance abuse, the following procedures are to be enacted to assure the patient's well-being. As always, careful documentation in the patient's chart is important.
 - a. Two staff members should approach the patient and calmly inform him of the behavioral and/or physical changes that were noted.
 - b. Bed rest for 48 hours may be instituted to facilitate patient care and prevent harm to the patient.
 - c. Urine and/or serum drug screens will be performed with the patient's permission to accurately identify the possible substance and thereby enable the staff to more accurately monitor the patient for potential adverse reactions.

1. Unless obtained per subpoena, urine and/or serum drug screening results can only be provided to law enforcement officials if consent to do so is obtained from the patient.
2. The patient must be informed of their right to consent or not consent to provision of drug screening results to law enforcement.
3. If a pregnant patient is found to be under the influence of drugs, Social work is obligated to report this to Children's Services, and efforts made to establish a treatment process.
 - d. Close medical/nursing observation of the patient will be enacted to prevent harm to the patient through unexpected drug interactions, falls, etc.
 - e. Prescribed medications and the patient's condition will be re-evaluated by a physician.
4. Possession, use or sale of drugs (including alcohol) is violations of hospital policy and/or the law. Therefore, these actions may constitute administrative discharge and/or legal action.
5. If illegal drugs are seen or found in the possession of a patient, they should be removed and cataloged as is other patient property.
6. If illegal drugs are seen in a patient's possession on grounds, or if a suspected sale of illicit substances is witnessed, call the Sheriff's Department number 551. Be prepared to give your name, location, and a full description of people involved in the incident and the location where it took place. Stay on the line or meet the officers as instructed by the dispatcher.

Note: You may disclose the patient's name, address, age and sex. If the patient's condition is related to possession of the illegal drugs, the facility may release the general condition of the patient, and the reason for treatment.
7. Should law enforcement want to interrogate the patient, and the patient objects, law enforcement should be notified of this and any therapeutic concerns about the interrogation. However, Rancho staff will not physically prevent law enforcement from interrogating the patient.
8. Following initial measures to assure patient safety, the Nurse Manager of the Unit will arrange an interdisciplinary team conference to discuss further action that will be taken with the patient. The Area Administrator, Clinical Nursing Director, Patient Advocate, and campus Sheriff should be notified by telephone and included in team discussions as necessary.
9. An Event Notification must be filled out through Safety Intelligence on the Intranet.
10. The primary care physician retains the ultimate authority to evaluate the patient's need for continued care or whether the patient should be discharged.

11. Treatment as appropriate and available will be provided to assist the patient, if the patient is willing, to address their use of drugs.

REFERENCES: US Supreme Court - Ferguson et al. V, city of Charleston et al. U.S. 2001
California Consent Manual, Chapters 1, 4 and 17
Civil Code section 56.16 and 45 CFR section 164.512(f)(5)

BJ:bj
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