

**LAC+USC MEDICAL CENTER
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING SERVICES POLICY**

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| Subject: COMMUNICATION WITH PATIENT'S FAMILY / SURROGATE | Original Issue Date: 10/06 | Policy # 126 |
| | Supersedes: 04/17 | Effective Date: 10/22 |
| Departments Consulted: | Reviewed & Approved by: Professional Practice Committee Nurse Executive Committee | Approved by: (signature on file) Nancy Blake Chief Nursing Officer |

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines regarding communication with patient's family and/ or designated surrogate when there is a significant change in patient condition, unanticipated adverse outcomes or emergent situation.

POLICY

The family and/or surrogate shall be notified as soon as possible of significant changes in patient condition including emergency occurrences and unanticipated outcomes that may pose a threat to patient's health, safety or well being. Patient's family and /or legal representative/surrogate play a vital role in the care of the patient.

PROCEDURE

Per patient's request, communicate to the provider the presence of a designated surrogate, patient's desire for involvement of family in the care and psychosocial and cultural variables that influence their perception and understanding of the care received.

Notify patient's provider immediately of significant changes in patient condition, emergent problems and adverse patient outcomes and discuss need to inform family and/or surrogate.

Collaborate with primary provider and interdisciplinary health team to contact family and/or surrogate as soon as possible in the event of an emergency.

Collaborate with the interdisciplinary health team to address the psychosocial concerns, educational and spiritual needs of the family.

Provide the family and /or surrogate with an opportunity to ask questions, discuss ethical concerns and healthcare decisions for the patient as appropriate with the provider.

Inform family of patient's admission or transfer from unit.

Inform family and /or surrogate of the availability of Social Services and Spiritual Care to assist with psychosocial and or the grieving process needs.

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| | Initials: (signature on file) | | |

Reassure family that care measures are provided to ensure patient's comfort and dignity.

DOCUMENTATION

The Nursing staff shall document assessment of the psychosocial and communication needs of the patient / family / surrogate and the collaboration with the provider and interdisciplinary team to address their concerns, needs for information and support provided as appropriate when significant changes in patient condition occurs.

Document communication made with family and/ or d surrogate in the electronic health record.

RESPONSIBILITY

Licensed Staff in collaboration with the Interdisciplinary team.

REFERENCE

Patient's Rights
 Joint Commission Patient Safety Standards
 Attending Staff Policy & Procedure Policy #102, Disclosure of Outcomes: Anticipated and Unanticipated

REVISION DATES

09/08, 04/13, 04/17, 10/22