



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
HARBOR-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER**

**SUBJECT:** REFERRALS TO CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK

**POLICY NO.** 384

<b>CATEGORY:</b> Provision of Care	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> 9/02
<b>POLICY CONTACT:</b> Jennifer Murray	<b>UPDATE/REVISION DATE:</b> 8/21
<b>REVIEWED BY COMMITTEE(S):</b>	

**PURPOSE:**

To define the method of referring identified patients and their families to Clinical Social Work services.

**POLICY:**

Harbor-UCLA Medical Center will ensure that all patients have access to Clinical Social Work services consistent with Federal, State, and County regulations and The Joint Commission standards. Priority is given to high-risk patients as defined by those patients who, because of their severe medical diagnosis and/or treatment combined with their psychosocial situation, are at risk for a maladaptive response. Maladaptive responses may result from emotional, social, and economic stresses of illness.

**PROCEDURE:**

**A. Sources of Referrals**

- Any member of the multi-disciplinary team who identifies a patient or his/her family with psychosocial needs can make a referral.
- The Utilization Review Nurse refers cases with placement problems to the Clinical Social Work Department as soon as they are identified.
- Patients and families can make a self-referral by going directly to the Clinical Social Work Department or requesting the ward staff make a referral.
- Clinical Social Work identifies and conducts assessments on all patients under 21 years of age who remain hospitalized three days or more.
- Clinical Social Work receives automatic referrals through the electronic health record (EHR) on patients who are identified by nursing as homeless or who have requested an Advance Directive document.

**B. Submission of Request**

Requests for Clinical Social Work are made through the hospital's EHR. Hospital staff shall enter an Order to request Social Work services in the Orders section of the EHR by searching for **Social Work** and selecting either "Consult to Social Work", "Consult to Clinical Social Worker" or, if in the Ambulatory Care setting, "Specialty Request to Social Work." Hospital staff must complete three required fields:

**REVISED:** 2/05, 5/14, 8/17, 8/21

**REVIEWED:** 9/02, 5/14, 8/17, 8/21

**APPROVED BY:**   
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1. **Care Team:** Hospital staff note the care team assigned to the patient using a free text field.
2. **Reason for Consult:** Hospital staff select their reason for referral using a drop-down menu of choices. If they select "Other" they are prompted to enter details under "Special Instructions."
3. **Physician Contact Number:** Hospital staff will enter the physician's call back number using a free text field.

**Examples of cases to refer may include:**

- Abuse (Child, Elder/Dependent Adult, Intimate Partner Violence/Domestic Violence)
- Adjustment to Illness/New Diagnosis
- Advance Directive
- Discharge Planning/Placement (SNF, Board & Care, Drug Rehab, Shelter, Recuperative Care)
- Grief/Bereavement
- Non-Adherence/Non-Compliance
- Rape/Sexual Assault
- Referral to Community Resources
- Substance Abuse
- Suicidal/Homicidal Ideation
- Unidentified patient/need to locate next-of-kin

**C. Processing of Referrals**

1. Upon receipt of referral, Clinical Social Work will:
  - a. Complete and chart assessments on in-patients within 72 hours of the receipt of the referral.
  - b. Assess patients admitted to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) within 48 hours of admission, or sooner if the circumstances warrant.
  - c. Assess all patients under 21 years of age that remain hospitalized three days or more.