



**RANCHO LOS AMIGOS NATIONAL REHABILITATION CENTER**  
Occupational Therapy and Recreation Therapy Department

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

<b>SUBJECT: TREATMENT AREA SAFETY</b>	<b>Policy No.: 603</b> <b>Revised: January 2020</b> <b>Supersedes: July 2012</b> <b>Page: 1 of 5</b>
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**PURPOSE**

To provide, to the greatest extent possible, a safe environment for patients, visitors, and staff.

**POLICY**

The following shall be in effect in all treatment areas.

**PROCEDURE**

A. Patient Supervision:

1. Patients must not be left unsupervised in any treatment area at any time.
2. Students/Interns must not be left unsupervised with patients in clinic areas (see Departmental Policy No. 219.1, "Supervision of Interns and Trainees as Related to Safety").
3. Volunteers work under the direct supervision of Occupational Therapy or Recreation Therapy personnel (see Departmental Policy No. 218, "Volunteers").

B. Common Safety Issues During Patient Treatment:

1. Staff is responsible for knowing the transfer ability of the patients with who they work.
2. Check that patients in wheelchairs (or other ambulatory equipment with locks) lock their wheels before attempting transfers or when engaged in an activity at a work surface.
3. Explain the proper use of tools to patients and watch that they use them correctly and safely.
4. Patients are not permitted to take potentially dangerous items (knives, scissors and other sharp implements) out of the treatment area. All such equipment must be accounted for and secured in a locked cabinet at the finish of an activity.

5. Check that set-up of patient treatment is safe given the patients abilities.
6. Be sure heat applications of any type (splinting material, hot packs) are at a safe temperature for use with the individual patient and his/her tolerance for heat is continually assessed. (see Departmental Policy No. 613.1, "Application of Hot Packs").
7. Do not create dust or sawdust or use items with strong odor when patients are in the area. Use potentially irritating products in well ventilated areas, or outside when possible.
8. Therapeutic Exercises:
  - a. Secure weight cuffs well so that they do not fall off.
  - b. Check equipment for wear (e.g. frayed ropes, worn-out velcro on cuffs, faulty hardware).
  - c. Check that all straps are fastened and that the patient's arm is stable before adding weights.
  - d. Return weights to safe storage on hooks or other designated places.
9. Reciprocal Pulleys:
  - a. Check that ropes are not frayed.
  - b. Supervise patients during exercise if there is any question about the patient's safety.
10. Miscellaneous Equipment:

Specific precautions must be followed when using any equipment with a patient.
11. Bathing Evaluations:
  - a. Follow precautions listed in the Bathing Evaluation Departmental Policy No. 305.
  - b. To improve patient safety, performance of bathing/showering with a patient during a Saturday or holiday should only be performed if the staff working with the patient on the weekend or holiday has already worked with the patient and is familiar with him/her and his/her situation.

C. Flammable Supplies:

1. Store containers of flammable solvents, paints, cement or alcohol in the treatment area's flammable materials cabinet. (Alcohol wipes in packets may be kept in clinic area.)
2. Keep the flammable supply storage cabinet free of any combustible items (e.g. paper, yarn).
3. Label all containers in the flammable and/or hazardous materials cabinet.
4. Store flammable liquids in flammable storage cabinets.
5. Enforce the "no smoking" rule at all times.
6. Clean the work area immediately after use of any flammable supplies.
7. Staff are responsible for knowing the proper use of various solvents.
8. Clean brushes immediately after use; do not leave in solvents to soak.
9. All items should be labeled with an orange dot designating them as hazardous.
10. A materials safety data sheet (MSDS) should be on file for each product.

D. Electrical Equipment:

1. Staff is responsible for knowing proper use of any equipment prior to use. Instructions are available in the treatment area or in the OT/RT office.
2. Staff must successfully complete a competency check out on select pieces of electrical equipment.
3. If staff identifies defective equipment, the individual is responsible for:
  - a. Tagging the equipment with a red "Defective Equipment" tag and removing equipment from service.
  - b. Reporting repair need to the Building Crafts Department or notifying the designated individual in the treatment area.
4. Check that equipment has 3-prong plugs and/or have been approved for use by the Biomedical Department as designated by the green sticker on the equipment.

5. Check that cords from electrical appliances do not cause a hazard for others.
6. Staff is responsible for knowing what equipment is safe for patients to use.
7. All electrical equipment brought into the Rehabilitation Center must be checked and approved by the Biomedical Department before it is used.

**E. Power Equipment:**

1. Staff must successfully complete a competency checkout in order to use power equipment (see Departmental Policy No. 608).
2. Wear goggles when using power woodworking equipment.
3. Thoroughly vacuum and clean the work area after using power woodworking equipment.
4. Unplug all electrical equipment after use.

**F. Age-Specific Safety Concerns:**

Staff is oriented to and must demonstrate good awareness of age-specific safety concerns as identified by the Department (see Attachments A through E).

**G. Crash Carts:**

1. Crash carts are located in the PT/OT treatment areas on each floor of the JPI building and in the Outpatient Therapy area.
2. The area OT or PT Manager, or designee, is responsible for crash cart maintenance.
3. Crash carts must be checked daily, on each day that patients are treated in the area.
4. The OT or PT Manager, or designee, completes crash cart log including checking that all supplies are present and that dates are current, battery is charged, oxygen levels are appropriate and other supplies/medicines are available.

5. OT or PT Manager, or designee, is responsible for restocking crash cart if supplies are found used or missing. These items may be obtained from pharmacy, respiratory or central supply, depending on the item.

References: Injury & Illness Prevention Manual.

Departmental Policy No. 219.1, "Supervision of Interns and Trainees as Related to Safety".

Departmental Policy No. 218, "Volunteers".

Departmental Policy No. 305, "Bathing Evaluations and Training by Occupation Therapy".

Departmental Policy No. 608, "Use of Power Tools".

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Director, Occupational Therapy and Recreation Therapy Department