

Department: Medical Staff

Subject: PATIENT COVERAGE BY THE MEDICAL STAFF	Issued: 2-26-93	Revised 12-2009
	Approved	

PURPOSE: To assure that all inpatients, and patients on observation have medical follow up by a physician.

POLICY: Sweeny Community Hospital will have 24 hour physician coverage.

REGULATORY REFERENCE: CMS, TDSHS

DEFINITIONS: None

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT:

Medical Staff

RELATED POLICIES: Staff Call Schedule

PROCEDURE:

Active Staff physicians participate in on-call coverage. Active Staff on-call duty can be delegated to physician assistant (PA) or adult nurse practitioner (ANP) under their supervision if needed.

The hospital will be covered by one medical staff practitioner (MD, DO, PA or ANP) at all times. The on-call practitioner is responsible for responding to calls from nurses station for inpatients and patients in observation status. The on-call practitioner can also be contacted for admissions from the Emergency Department (ED). If a patient does not have a primary care physician (PCP), the on-call practitioner is responsible for responding to the inpatient's needs.

If the patient has a PCP, the PCP may choose to follow the patient's care while he/she is in the hospital. The PCP will be called and given the option to keep his/her patient or ask that the on-call practitioner assume care. The on-call practitioner or the PCP (whoever is assigned to the patient) is responsible for responding to calls and or pages from the hospital regarding patient's needs within thirty (30) minutes time.

In a rare event that the attending PCP or on-call practitioner can not be reached and medical advice is required, the ED physician will be asked for support until the attending or on-call practitioner responds. The staff practitioners should notify the hospital switchboard operator when leaving town and as a courtesy notify the on-call practitioner.

The Emergency Department is covered twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week, by a hospitalist physician who is contracted by the hospital's ED staffing agency. The ED physician is responsible for providing care for patients who present to the ED. The ED physician may occasionally follow an inpatient or a patient on observation. This should be a rare occasion due to the ED physician having primary responsibilities in the Emergency Department.

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The ED physician will respond to all "Code Blue" announcements in the hospital unless there are two "Code Blue" in progress at the same time.