



<b>Roswell Park Cancer Institute</b> Policy and Procedure	<b>Date Issued:</b> 5/1/1997	<b>Number:</b> 120.1
<b>Title:</b> Ethics Governing Patient Care Issues	<b>Revision:</b> 7	<b>Effective Date:</b> 1/6/14
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## **A. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

The purpose of this policy is to describe the Roswell Park Cancer Institute (RPCI) code of ethical behavior that addresses patient respect and informed consent, conflict of interest, patient billing practices, confidentiality, admission, transfer and discharge practices, marketing practices, purchasing practices, and commitment to employees. All members of the RPCI workforce including volunteers, and the Board of Directors shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with this organizational statement and its supporting policies. This policy and procedure is to be followed in conjunction with the RPCI Corporate Code of Conduct.

RPCI is dedicated to excellence in research, education, training, patient care, and community relations. The Institute and its employees strive to provide high-quality, cost-effective patient care, while preserving and enhancing the dignity and humanity of that care. The Institute is dedicated to providing comprehensive cancer care in a non-discriminatory manner to all persons in need regardless of their ability to pay.

## **B. SCOPE**

This policy applies to the entire workforce and Board of Directors.

## **C. ADMINISTRATION**

The Administration is responsible for application of this policy.

## **D. POLICY / PROCEDURE**

The Board of Directors and all employees and volunteers of RPCI must adhere to established ethical guidelines in the provision of all aspects of patient care.

### **I. Mission and Vision Statements**

RPCI is committed to providing the highest quality, state-of-the-art diagnosis and treatment, in a caring environment based on the concept that a holistic approach to the medical and psychosocial needs of the patient is essential to successful treatment. In addition, RPCI's mission is to understand, prevent and cure cancer.

## II. Respect for the Patient

Each patient must be assured the broad range of rights stated in Title 10 of the New York State Hospital Code Rules and Regulations, Section 405.7.

All patients at RPCI should be accorded:

1. Consideration, respect, and full recognition of their individuality and personal needs, including their cultural, psychosocial and spiritual beliefs.
2. The right to privacy to the extent consistent with providing quality medical care to the patient.
3. Equal treatment with no discrimination related to race, creed, sex, national origin, disability (within the capacity of the hospital to provide treatment), sexual orientation, or source of payment for care.

Open and honest communication should occur with all patients and/or their designated representatives with regard to the medical care provided. Patients and/or their representatives should be involved in the decision making process regarding the care that is provided. All patients should be informed of the significant risks and alternatives associated with the care they are receiving. The Institute will continually seek to understand each patient's objectives for care and respect their requests. Research involving human subjects will only be performed with the fully informed consent of the patient and in compliance with Institutional Review Board policies and procedures, and applicable law.

## III. Resolution of Patient Care Conflicts

RPCI recognizes the need to resolve conflicts that arise among those who participate in patient care decisions. Staff will seek to resolve all conflicts fairly, objectively, and in a timely manner. Ethical issues that cannot be resolved by strict policy interpretation, should be presented to the Medical Staff Ethics Committee or, if involving non-medical issues, the Institute Ethics Committee. Issues involving Institute personnel that cannot be resolved by strict policy interpretation should be presented to the Director of Employee Relations.

## IV. Fairness in Billing Practices

Patients in a hospital in New York State have the right to receive an itemized bill and explanation of all charges.

Billing practices are guided by a regulatory framework, external to RPCI. Both RPCI and Clinical Practice Plan, which provide billable services to patients, will invoice only for the services provided. Bills will be disbursed in a timely and confidential manner. Assistance will be provided to patients in need of assistance in understanding the costs related to their care ([Policy # 421.1](#)). RPCI will attempt to resolve questions and objections that arise pertaining to the cost of services to the patient's satisfaction, while considering the best interests of the organization.

## V. Confidentiality of Personal and Health Related Information

Federal and New York State law and regulations ensure the privacy and confidentiality of personally identifying information of patients, medical records and personal information about employees. The necessity of maintaining the confidentiality of such information and records is recognized by RPCI and is a mandatory obligation of all members of the

RPCI workforce, including volunteers and employees of Health Research, Inc. and the Roswell Park Alliance Foundation. The specific rules and regulations governing the use and disclosure of "protected health information" at RPCI are set forth generally in Institute Policy #[408.10](#), as well as other policies and procedures of the Institute and departmental policies, procedures and regulations.

All patients shall receive an up to date copy of the RPCI Notice of Patient Privacy Practices as soon as practicable at or after their initial admission or outpatient registration. In addition, said Notice shall be posted on the RPCI external website, and copies shall be posted and made available in the RPCI Ambulatory Clinics.

#### VI. Admission, Transfer and Discharge Practices

Admission of patients for treatment takes place in the Registration Department. The Registration Department must ensure that all patients or their representatives receive and understand their rights and responsibilities. For admissions taking place after normal business hours, the nursing staff gives an overview of patient rights and responsibilities, and registration department representative ensures that the patient or representative receives and understands these rights and responsibilities the following day or as soon as possible thereafter.

Patients with a diagnosis of cancer or suspicion of malignancy shall be admitted if medically indicated, except those patients with mental disturbances whose complete care and safety cannot be assured by virtue of staffing or physical facility limitations. All patients treated at RPCI are transferred or discharged in accordance with applicable standards of care, laws, rules and regulations. Such transfers or discharges shall be as medically indicated by the patient's condition or, for the welfare of other patients where necessary for their safety. Advance notice shall be given to ensure orderly transfer or discharge.

### **E. DISTRIBUTION**

This Policy and Procedure will be distributed to all Managers via the RPCI internal web page and to holders of backup hard copies of the manual. Managers are responsible for communicating policy content to pertinent staff.