

Phelps Memorial Health Center Code of Conduct

I. Introduction:

Phelps Memorial Health Center is responsible for, and committed to, ethical behavior toward our patients, our community, and our employees. We intend to be a trustworthy organization in all of our activities. Our mission statement calls for a progressive family centered health care provider delivering a continuum of care that enhances the quality of life for the people we serve which includes honesty, integrity and unparalleled professionalism. Our strategic plan can only be achieved when we behave ethically and maintain organizational trustworthiness.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to help make sure that we put our values into action and that we follow all the laws and rules that apply to us. The Code of Conduct is an important part of our overall Compliance Program, which has been approved by the Board of Directors of the Phelps Memorial Health Center. All directors, officers, employees, contractors, vendors, volunteers, and medical and clinical staff must comply with this Code of Conduct as well as the other policies and procedures that make up the Compliance Program.

It is the duty of every member of our staff to uphold the Code of Conduct and to report any violations of this Code. Alleged violations will be investigated by appropriate personnel and disciplinary action for violations shall be enforced through the disciplinary policies and procedures of Phelps Memorial Health Center. Disciplinary actions will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may include dismissal from employment.

II. Standards

We will comply with all applicable laws and regulations: Phelps Memorial Health Center is subject to numerous local, state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to all aspects of its operation. Each employee is responsible for understanding and complying with those laws which are applicable to his or her position at Phelps Memorial Health Center. All professionals must also follow the ethical standards dictated by their respective professional organizations.

We will provide exceptional care to our patients: Phelps Memorial Health Center employees shall treat all patients in a way that protects their rights and preserves their dignity. Phelps Memorial Health Center provides all patients with equal access to care and does not tolerate any type of harassment or prohibited discrimination in our environment. Any employee has the right to refuse participation in the care of any patient due to religious, moral or ethical beliefs, but that employee must report that refusal to his or her immediate supervisor who shall then be responsible for reassigning the patient's care. The employee refusing care may be expected to take a voluntary day off, but will not be reprimanded for his or her religious, moral or ethical beliefs.

We will protect our patient's right to privacy: Phelps Memorial Health Center is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of all patient information in accordance with applicable legal and ethical standards. We comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in that we do not use, disclose, or discuss patient specific information with others unless it is necessary to serve the patient or otherwise permitted by law. All directors, officers,

employees, contractors, vendors, volunteers and medical and clinical staff must abide by Phelps Memorial Health Center's policies regarding the protection of our patients' privacy as well as the protection of all aspects of our information systems.

We will conduct all business transactions with honesty and integrity. All employees will conduct themselves in ways that promote and continue the superior reputation of Phelps Memorial Health Center. All employees are expected to guard against fraud and the abuse of health care programs. Accordingly:

- We will not intentionally or knowingly make a false or fraudulent claim for payment. We will ensure that all requests for payment are for services that are reasonable, necessary and appropriate, and are provided by qualified persons. All claims for services will be billed in the correct amount and supported by the appropriate documentation.
- Accuracy of billing is a priority. All patient credit balances over \$7.00 will be refunded. Patient credits less than \$7.00 are refunded if the patient requests. All credit balances from insurer overpayment are refunded to the insurer or patient as directed by the insurer. Contracting for discount will be allowed subject to oversight by the Board. Any other adjustments to patient's accounts must be approved by a senior administrator. Collection efforts shall be consistent and shall strive to balance the service image of the hospital with the business prudence required to achieve financial goals.
- We will comply with the Stark Self-Referral Law. This law prohibits the hospital from accepting referrals by a physician of Medicare or Medicaid patients for "designated health services" when the physician or an immediate family member has a financial relationship with the entity (unless the arrangement complies with applicable legal exceptions).
- We will comply with Anti-Kickback laws. We will not offer or accept remuneration of any kind as an inducement to make a referral for the furnishing of any item or service. We will conduct all business transactions free from offers or solicitations of gifts, favors and other improper inducements.
- Our employees will not offer or accept inappropriate gifts or gratuities to or from patients, vendors, or government officials. Hospital employees may not receive any gift under circumstances that could be construed as an improper attempt to influence the Hospital's or an employee's decisions or actions. Whenever an employee is not sure whether a gift is prohibited by this policy, the gift must be reported to the Compliance Officer upon its receipt.
- We will avoid conflicts of interest. All employees, medical staff members and board members of Phelps Memorial Health Center must avoid engaging in any activities that conflict with the interests of the hospital or its patients. Anyone with a potential conflict of interest must make disclosure to their supervisor or the Compliance Officer.
- We will comply with all applicable antitrust laws and regulations. Employees must avoid communications with competitors that might interfere with free and fair competition such as discussions regarding fees, how prices are set, labor costs or boycotts.
- We will maintain accurate and complete medical records and other business documents in accordance with state and federal law.
- We will be truthful in all marketing and public relations. All public statements in whatever form will be accurate and convey our services in a responsible manner. We will not solicit patients for services beyond our capacity or licensure.

We will comply with the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act. We will serve patients within our medical capabilities, regardless of their financial status. Accordingly, no

patient seeking treatment will be denied medically necessary treatment. Patients will be discharged when medical criteria supports such discharge. No patient will be transferred to another facility unless medically appropriate. If the patient requests a transfer a transfer may be accomplished with full consent of the recipient medical facility, recipient medical providers, and the patient. All transfers shall have documentation which complies with Federal statutes regarding transfers. No ambulance or other conveyance shall be diverted from bringing a patient to PMHC unless we have no capacity to provide necessary care and such diversion contributed to public health and safety.

We will provide a safe workplace. All employees must know and follow all laws, regulations, and Phelps Memorial Health Center policies and procedures for promoting health and safety. All employees should immediately contact his or her supervisor if they have questions, are injured while working or if they notice any dangers or unsafe conditions that need to be corrected.

We will comply with all state and federal laws protecting the environment. Employees shall dispose of all waste and other materials and store all chemicals and substances in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

We will not tolerate harassment or discrimination. Phelps Memorial Health Center is strongly committed to a policy of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all qualified applicants and employees, without regard to race, color, gender, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, or sexual orientation. Our policy of non-discrimination extends to the care of patients. Phelps Memorial Health Center prohibits harassment or discrimination of its employees in any form by supervisors, coworkers, customers or vendors. If an employee feels he or she or any patient has been discriminated against or harassed, he or she should contact the Department Leader, CEO, Human Resource Leader or the Compliance Officer.

We will not tolerate intimidating and disruptive behaviors. Phelps Memorial Health Center has a zero-tolerance policy toward the hostile behaviors that create breakdowns in the communication and collaboration necessary to deliver quality patient care. Intimidating and disruptive behaviors can be overt, such as verbal outbursts and physical threats, but they can also include more passive activities such as exhibiting a condescending attitude or refusing to take part in assigned duties. Disruptive and intimidating behaviors should be reported so that management can address them using the disciplinary process. Phelps Memorial Health Center has many tools that may be used to report such behaviors, including the Dr. Armstrong procedures, Unusual Occurrence reports and the Compliance Hotline (1-800-273-8452). Phelps Memorial Health Center does not allow retaliation against anyone who makes a report of intimidating and disruptive behaviors.

We will appropriately maintain and use the assets of Phelps Memorial Health Center. No assets shall be converted to personal use. No part of the net earnings of Phelps Memorial Health Center shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to, its trustees, Executive Staff, employees or other private persons having directly or indirectly any personal or private interest in the activities of Phelps Memorial Health Center, except to the extent that such payments constitute reasonable compensation for services rendered in the necessary course of Phelps Memorial Health Center's business.

We will not engage in political activities. The Hospital and its representatives may not participate in or intervene in any political campaign for or against any candidate. We support employee participation in the political process, but personal political opinions should not be communicated, orally or in writing, as those of the Hospital.

III. How to Report Violations of the Standards

If any employee becomes aware of any possible violation of this Code of Conduct or any other aspect of the Compliance Program and Manual, he or she must report the concern. The concern can be reported to the employee's supervisor, the Compliance Department, or by calling the Compliance Hotline. **The Compliance Hotline number is 1-800-273-8452.** All calls to the hotline are confidential, and the caller may remain anonymous. To ensure confidentiality, the telephone hotline is operated by an organization not affiliated with Phelps Memorial Health Center. Calls are answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Follow up on all calls is available by a return call to the hotline.

All calls and other reports of noncompliance will be logged, tracked and investigated to conclusion. In conducting investigations, the Compliance Department and Compliance Committee shall respect the confidentiality of privileged records and information, and shall comply with applicable confidentiality laws and ethical standards.

Phelps Memorial Health Center does not allow retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports a possible problem or violation.

IV. Conclusion

This Code is an evolving document, and we encourage you to offer your suggestions for improving the Code. The language and specific requirements of the Code may change, but our commitment to ethical behavior will not.