

Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital – Code of Ethical Behavior

Purpose

Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital exists to restore independence, hope and freedom through rehabilitation to people with disabilities. We seek excellence through innovation, leadership and advocacy. In achieving this mission, staff will constantly strive to demonstrate honesty, integrity, compassion, concern for human dignity and patient rights, and commitment to ethical behavior.

The process of providing health care involves potentially conflicting interests of patients, families, caregivers, payers and the community. Mary Free Bed has established expectations for ethical behaviors for patient admission, transfer and discharge procedures, patient billing practices, marketing activities and relationships with other persons or organizations.

All Mary Free Bed staff are expected to abide by this code of ethical behavior and any ethical codes established by professional associations representing their discipline or profession. Members of the board of trustees, medical staff and hospital staff are informed of this policy during orientation sessions.

A. Patient Admission, Transfer and Discharge Procedures

Patient care decisions are made with patients' involvement and consider the best use of their resources. Patients who meet admission criteria are admitted regardless of their ability to pay for their care.

All patients are treated with dignity, respect and courtesy. The Patient Rights and Responsibilities summary describes patients' access to treatment, confidentiality, personal safety and understandable information about diagnosis and treatment. Patients receive a copy of the Patient Rights and Responsibilities summary at the time of admission. Patients are encouraged to become involved in their rehabilitation program and have a responsibility to participate in their care. Patients also have a right to refuse care and/or the responsibility to participate in their care.

Mary Free Bed provides services for patients within the scope of existing admission criteria. The decision to transfer patients is based on patients' medical needs and not on their financial status. Patients who require medical attention that is not available at Mary Free Bed are transferred to an appropriate facility for care.

A patient is discharged only upon order of a physician, based on an appropriate discharge plan. Before a patient is discharged, the patient and family receive information concerning transportation, equipment, medications, diet and nutrition and rehabilitation techniques. Mary Free Bed staff provides this information based on the patient's and family's learning abilities, cultural practices, physical or cognitive limitations and any language barriers.

B. Patient Billing Practices

Mary Free Bed attempts to secure information on patients' insurance coverage for to supplement information obtained directly by the patient or family. Staff attempt to help the patient and family to accurately determine their financial responsibilities and provide timely explanations to patients and families for any billing questions.

C. Marketing Activities

Mary Free Bed staff conduct marketing, advertising and public relations activities with honesty and integrity. Mary Free Bed staff conduct data collection using accepted methods for gathering and analyzing data and maintaining its confidentiality. Mary Free Bed staff do not share data that does not originate at Mary Free Bed unless they obtain the permission of the owner.

D. Potential Situations Involving Conflicts of Interest

Mary Free Bed identifies the relationship of the hospital to other health care, educational and payer institutions to address potential conflicts of interest. Members of the board of trustees, medical staff, and hospital staff disclose potential conflicts of interest so that appropriate action may be taken to ensure that such a conflict does not inappropriately influence important decisions.

Board members and hospital managers complete annual disclosure statements identifying any personal business affiliations that pose conflicts or potential conflicts of interest. Individuals are expected to fully disclose the conflicts of interest and refrain from influencing or voting on issues involving conflicts of interest.

E. Processes for Reviewing Conflicts of Interest and Ethical Concerns

Through the hospital's mission, vision and values, strategic planning and quality improvement activities, Mary Free Bed staff strive to provide the most appropriate care and to act in the best interest of all parties. Through direct discussions between the patient and family, caregivers and payers, Mary Free Bed staff attempt to resolve any conflicts of interest and ethical concerns. Identified conflicts of interest and concerns that an ethical code has been violated are addressed through one of the following mechanisms: the patient grievance process, staff grievance process, medical staff bylaws and rules and regulations, or Human Subjects Review/Ethics Committee.