



271 Frances St.
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Subject: Code White	Date Approved: April 23, 2009
Approved by: Executive Director	Date Revised:
Specific to: Staff/Board of Directors	Next Review Date: September 2020

PURPOSE:

To provide safe management of agitated persons when they become violent or have the potential to do so. **Code White** is the signal to call for help with a **physically or verbally abusive patient**. This policy is adopted from the Listowel-Wingham Hospitals Alliance Code White policy.

POLICY:

The NHFHT recognizes its responsibility for the safety of patients, visitors, and staff.

The NHFHT believes that an individual's right to dignity, autonomy and freedom to control their behaviour should be protected as much as possible even while managing abusive behaviour.

The NHFHT believes and supports in planning ahead for individual situations. This starts with employing verbal techniques, physical and/or chemical restraints, or outside assistance as required.

Duties of employers

- Provide information, instruction and supervision to a worker to protect the health or safety of the worker
- Take every reasonable precaution in the circumstances for the protection of a worker
- prepare and review at least annually a written occupational health and safety policy and develop and maintain a program to implement that policy

Duties of supervisors

- advise a worker of the existence of any potential or actual danger to the health or safety of the worker of which the supervisor is aware
- provide a worker with written instructions as to the measures and procedures to be taken for protection of the worker
- take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker

Duties of workers

- Report to his or her supervisor any contravention of the occupational health and safety act or regulations or the existence of any hazard of which he or she know. This requirement can be interpreted to include any threat of violence or presence of a violent person



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Precipitating Factors

The following factors may lead a person to lose control and act out verbally or physically:

- displaced anger
- attention seeking
- fear of the unknown or consequences
- loss of self esteem
- recent transfer from another facility
- loss of personal power
- unresolved hearing/vision
- impaired
- lack of understanding of treatment
- literacy/language difficulties
- invasion of personal space
- weak social interpersonal skills
- recent visible physical disability

Six Conditions that Mark Pending Aggression:

- high noise level
- crowding
- closeness when giving personal care
- the day shift rather than evening/nights
- following transfer from familiar surroundings to unfamiliar surroundings
- invasion of personal space

Development of Crisis Behaviour:

Key behaviours to recognize:

- anxiety
- noticeable change in behaviour
- questioning
- challenging or manipulative questions
- refusal
- non-compliance
- irrational
- emotional outburst
- acting out

Procedure:

1. For staff protection at the NHFHT no staff member is to be alone in the workplace. Two staff members must be present in the building at all times.



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2. If you are in a situation that a patient becomes violent don't allow yourself to be cornered. Always have an unobstructed exit. E.g. make sure you are sitting between the patient and the door.
3. In an Emergency situation Any NHFHT employee needing assistance with an abusive/aggressive patient you can activate "Code White".
4. In a calm clear voice announce "Code White" and give the location, three times. If more appropriate to situation. This will bring available hospital staff to your assistance.
5. Should further assistance be required you can use any or all of them at your discretion depending on the situation. They are:
 - o For Town Police call 357-1214
 - o Inform them you want a town police officer. A town police officer is on duty 5:00 a.m.-6:00 a.m. (Mon-Fri) 5:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. (Sat & Sun) and on call after that. They respond in minutes for an emergency call.
 - o Call local ambulance personnel at 357-2951.
6. When the situation has been defused the Clinical Resource Nurse will announce "All Clear".
7. In a case involving injuring to the patient or staff, an incident report will be completed

What are some tips for working with patients?

- Review the patient's profile before meeting. Take note of any potential concerns and use precautionary measures if necessary (e.g., have another person in the room).
- Approach patients in a non-threatening, respectful manner.
- Provide the right information at the right time. DO NOT overload patients or family members with too much medical information or technical jargon.
- Clearly and fully explain to the patient before and during the procedure; for example,
 - o What is involved.
 - o How long it will take.
 - o Whether it will hurt.
- If you feel threatened, DO NOT conduct intimate examinations of patients alone. Arrange to have a colleague in the room or close by.
- If you can, leave the door open during any potentially violent consultation to allow for visual or verbal contact with other staff.
- Record instances of abuse immediately following the event so that details are not forgotten when reporting.
- Consider transferring aggressive patients to more secure or restrictive settings if possible.

If a patient becomes hostile during a procedure

- Stop what you are doing, if possible.



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- Ask the patient to tell you what is wrong.
- If you can, correct the situations. Otherwise, explain why you cannot notify the physician and document.

This is a policy derived from The Listowel Wingham Hospital Alliance policy and the NHFHT will adhere to this policy.