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Sponsor Janice Benggio:
DIR, MEDICAL
STAFF
Section POC-Medical
Staff-MS
Manuals General
Administrative

POC-008-055 - Observers in Broward Health Hospitals

I. Purpose

The following guidelines provide current information on Broward Health Medical Staff practices for managing the review and approval of those who wish to observe under the supervision of a staff physician in a Broward Health (BH) facility (hereinafter referred to as "Hospital").

II. Guidelines

OBSERVER: Defined as an individual, not otherwise in an American Osteopathic Association or Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education accredited post-graduate training program, who will not provide patient care or have direct patient contact (hereinafter referred to as "Observer"). Observers differ from students in an academic program in that the observational experience is not an educational requirement of any academic program.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Physicians (foreign or domestic)
- Registered Nurses (foreign or domestic)
- Other healthcare professionals
- Individuals not covered under an existing affiliation agreement

Applicants must be at least sixteen (16) years of age.

III. Policy

- A. The Observation Program is monitored by, and all relevant documentation is maintained by, the respective hospital's Medical Staff Office.
- B. The observation experience is limited to a maximum of forty (40) hours per week.
- C. Subject to the patient's permission, Observer may watch procedures, surgeries, and

patient interviews. Observers may also attend patient rounds, teaching conferences, grand rounds, and non-confidential hospital committee meetings with advance permission from the committee chairperson. Observer may be permitted in the operating room with the permission of the attending physician.

- D. Under no circumstances will Observer participate in, provide, or make any decisions relating to the evaluation, care or treatment of any patient. Observer may not participate in any patient care activities or research. Observer may not question, interview, or otherwise examine any patient. Observer may not access or review a patient's medical record or access any BH electronic systems. All decisions relating to the evaluation, care and treatment of each individual patient will be made solely by current members of the medical staff, allied health professionals, or other authorized BH personnel.
- E. Opportunities for observation may be limited to a reasonable number of individuals (as determined by BH Senior Leadership or the Executive Management team and Medical Staff Office) so as to maximize the learning experience for the Observer and minimize the potential disruption to patient care.
- F. All applicants for Observation opportunities must be sponsored by a member of the Hospital's medical staff (hereinafter referred to as "Sponsoring Physician"). The Sponsoring Physician is ultimately responsible for the Observer's adherence to this policy. Physician supervision of the Observer's experience is required at all times. If an Observer is left unattended, he/she may be unequivocally dismissed from the hospital.
- G. Observer who has an active illnesses, or who does not feel well, may not observe. Observer must be apparently healthy enough to participate in the Observer experience. An Observer will be asked to leave if staff believes the Observer presents a risk to the health and welfare of Hospital or Medical Staff, patients, or visitors.
- H. Broward Health may have Observer immediately vacate the premises if it is determined that the observational experience is not in the best interest of patients or staff.
- I. Observer assume all risks of, and are solely responsible for, any injury or illness (including exposure to hazards that could result in personal injury, illness or death, among others), including resultant medical care and treatment expenses, while participating in his/her observational experience at Broward Health. Signatures on the Observational Experience Request and Agreement form constitute the applicant's and Sponsoring Physician's release of liability related to the Observer experience. Observer is required to provide proof of health insurance coverage.
- J. Observer must abide by all policies, procedures, rules and regulations of Broward Health, including adherence to HIPAA, and contact and universal precautions.
- K. Observer must maintain absolute confidentiality of all information (whether oral, electronic, paper or any other form) that they may have access to during their experience.
- L. Observer agrees to reimburse and indemnify Broward Health for any damages or other injuries caused while participating in any observational experience at Broward Health.

- M. Observer agrees to refrain from representing himself/herself as an agent, representative, or employee of Broward Health at any time, and must display the appropriate identification above the waist at all times while participating in the observational experience. If the observational experience is less than one week she/he must obtain a visitor ID badge from the front desk. If the observational experience is to be more than one week a badge must be obtained from Human Resources. The ID badge will indicate "OBSERVER" status and include relevant dates. A process fee, paid by the Observer, may apply. Upon completion of the observational experience the ID badge must be returned to the Medical Staff Office at the Hospital. Failure to return the ID badge as required may preclude the Observer from future observation opportunities. The observational experience period may be time-limited and cannot exceed four (4) consecutive weeks. Observers may renew their request for observation.
- N. Observer must have a clean, neat appearance and appropriate dress and behavior, in accordance with Broward Health policies and procedures. Observers must not wear lab coats or scrubs unless required for the observation area.
- O. Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off and stored with personal belongings while observing. Video, audio, or any other type of recording by the Observer is expressly prohibited. Cell phones may not be taken into any surgical, operative, or procedural area.

IV. Procedure

- A. All applicants must submit the following required documentation at least two (2) weeks prior to the requested start date of observation to ensure that each application is reviewed in a timely manner. Any costs incurred are the applicant's sole responsibility.
 - 1. **Observers in Broward Health Hospitals - Request and Approval (*Attachment, page 1*)** – This form is to be completed in its entirety, which states documentation that must be provided.
 - 2. **Observers in Broward Health Hospitals - Acknowledgement (*Attachment, page 2*)** – This form is to be completed in its entirety by the sponsoring physician and the applicant. It is the applicant's responsibility to secure a sponsor.
 - 3. **Observers in Broward Health Hospitals - Vaccine Statement (*Attachment, page 3*)** – This form is to be completed in its entirety by the applicant.
- B. Completed forms must be submitted to the Medical Staff Office at the Hospital. The Hospital will ensure that the forms and attachments are complete.
- C. The Medical Staff Office at the Hospital will present the forms to the appropriate staff, up to and including the Regional Chief Medical Officer and relevant Medical Staff Leadership (i.e., section chief, department chair or vice chair, and/or chief of staff), for review, and approval decision.
- D. Upon completion of all forms, the Medical Staff Office at the Hospital will notify the applicant, Sponsoring Physician and appropriate hospital departments of the approval or denial of the application. Completed forms will be retained in the

Medical Staff Office at the Hospital.

- E. The Medical Staff Office will maintain a centralized tracking system of all Observers with names, dates of the observation, and relevant Sponsoring Physician.
- F. The Medical Staff Office will retain all paperwork in accordance with the BH records retention policy.

Attachments

- Observers in Broward Health Hospitals - Request and Approval (page 1 of 3)
- Observers in Broward Health Hospitals - Acknowledgement (page 2 of 3)
- Observers in Broward Health Hospitals - Vaccine Statement (page 3 of 3)

Attachments

[POC-008-055 - Observers Attachment.pdf](#)

Approval Signatures

Step Description

Approver

Date

Joshua Lenchus: SVP, CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER	06/2023
Janice Benggio: DIR, MEDICAL STAFF	06/2023