



Vice President and Chief Executive Officer of the Medical Center

MEDICAL CENTER POLICY NO. 0151

A. SUBJECT: Patient Choice in Selection of Home Health Agencies

B. EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2011 (R)

C. POLICY:

The Department of Social Work maintains a list of appropriate home health agency resources who have requested that the availability of their services be made known to Medical Center patients. Based upon the patient's condition and need, and in accordance with the procedure set forth in this Policy, this information will be provided to the patient or his/her surrogate decision maker to permit choice of post-discharge medical care and associated vendors of such services.

D. PROCEDURE:


1. All patients who are being referred for home healthcare shall be asked whether they have an agency preference. The social worker or staff person making this inquiry shall document each patient's selection in the medical record.
2. If the patient lacks capacity to make a decision and/or cannot communicate the decision, a surrogate decision maker, who may be a legal guardian or a family member, may state an agency preference. A telephone contact with the surrogate decision maker will be sufficient to confirm the preference. The social worker or the staff member obtaining the surrogate's decision must document the choice in the medical record. See [Medical Center Policy 0024 "Informed Decision-making"](#) for description and process for determination of patient capacity for decision-making.
3. The patient, or surrogate decision maker shall be told that the list was prepared in compliance with a requirement of the Medicare program, that the list only provides information about those agencies or vendors that have requested inclusion on the Medical Center's list, and that the Medical Center does not endorse the services of any agency or vendor on the list. The social worker or staff person presenting this information shall document the patient's or surrogate decision maker's decision in the medical record.
4. If the patient or surrogate decision maker does not have a preferred agency, or the agency selected does not have available and appropriate services, the social worker or staff member shall review with the patient or surrogate decision maker the list of agencies that can provide the necessary services and assist them as needed with a selection.

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The patient or surrogate decision maker shall be advised that Continuum Home Health Care is a department of the Medical Center and is a not-for-profit entity entirely owned by the Medical Center. The patient or surrogate decision maker shall also be informed that the list of available agencies was prepared in compliance with a requirement of the Medicare program; that the list only provides information about those agencies that have requested inclusion on the Medical Center's list; that the Medical Center does not endorse the services of any agency on the list. The social worker or staff person presenting this information shall then document in the medical record the selection made by the patient or surrogate decision maker.

5. In those instances where the patient's insurance carrier/payor identifies the agency it will reimburse for home healthcare provided to the patient, the social worker shall inform the patient or surrogate decision-maker of this identification. The patient or surrogate decision maker may select another agency or vendor, but the social worker shall advise the patient or surrogate decision-maker that his/her selection may not be covered by the insurer and that any questions about coverage should be addressed to the insurer.

SIGNATURE:



R. Edward Howell, CEO, UVA Medical Center

6/22/11

DATE:

Medical Center Policy No. 0151 (R)

Approved September 1993

Revised March 1995, October 1995, March 1999, March 2002, November 2002, March 2005, March 2008, June 2011

Approved by Chief Nursing Officer

Approved by Medical Center Administration