

DISCONTINUING PATIENT CARE

OPS.032

Approved By:	Chief Operations Officer	Adopted Date:	Unknown
Distribution:	All ODCHC Staff	Revision Date(s):	2/01, 7/04, 3/13

POLICY:

Standard of care and ODCHC's philosophy and mission statement do not allow us to arbitrarily abandon patients, "dump" them or refuse to see them based on discrimination. There are times, however, when withdrawing or terminating patient care is necessary for the welfare of the clinic and the staff. Reasons for withdrawing from patient care include the following:

- ◆ Disruptive, abusive, threatening and/or otherwise inappropriate behavior towards staff.
- ◆ Behavior that compromises the patient's own health and safety beyond acceptability.
- ◆ Excessive no-shows for appointments.
- ◆ Bad debt.

When a medical patient is withdrawn from the practice, they are given 30 days grace to find another provider and information about healthcare resources. Violent and threatening patients are not given a grace period, nor are counseling or dental patients. Patients are given a Release of Records Form so that we can send their records to another facility.

Before withdrawing a patient from the practice, every effort should be made to have them take responsibility for changing their behavior. (See guidelines on "Patient Discharge Request (ODCHC Form#464)", "OPS.027 Contracts With Patients", and "OPS.020 Missed Appointments".) All attempts at communicating with the patient must be clearly documented in the patient's chart.

Occasionally the request for withdrawing children or other dependents arises, usually based on the behavior of the parent or guardian. As a general rule, children are not to be withdrawn from the practice. Legally, we may be considered irresponsible for penalizing a child for the parent's behavior. The same would have to at least be considered for dependent adults.

PROCEDURE:

Request to Discontinue Patient Care:

- Staff person completes "Patient Discharge Request" form.
- For **Medical patients**, the request is given to Site Administrator for review with staff member and others, as appropriate.
- For **Counseling or Dental patients**, the request is given to the Mental Health Director or Dental Site Administrator for review with staff member and others, as appropriate.
- The Site Administrator and Mental Health Director are responsible for ensuring that, where appropriate, all efforts have been made to redirect patient behavior (e.g. contracts, documentation of efforts, redirecting no-shows, etc.).
- The Site Administrator and Mental Health Director notify the Medical/Dental Director of their recommendation and obtain approval.
- The completed request goes with a Combined Situation Report Form to the Risk Manager who prepares a letter for signature by the Operations Officer.
- The Risk Manager follows through on the notification (see flowsheet).

Denial of Requests to Discontinue Patient Care:

- Denial of a Request may occur at any level (Site Administrator, Mental Health/Dental Director or Site Medical Director, Risk Manager, Operations Officer).
- The individual denying the request must provide discussion and problem solving with the staff and put the denial in writing with cause.

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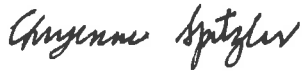
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- Denials may be brought to the Site Administrator for reconsideration.
- Request denials are kept by the Site Administrator.

Appeals for reinstatement

- Appeals for reinstatement of a patient are made by staff members to the Site Administrator for medical and dental patients, the Mental Health Director for counseling patients.
- The request must be in writing and will be handled on an individual basis with assistance from other staff members as appropriate.
- **Only the Operations Officer has the ability to reinstate a patient once they have been discharged from care.** The Site Administrator, Mental Health Director should route any valid appeals for reinstatement to the Operations Officer.
- A patient contract should always be a consideration.
- If a patient is reinstated: All affected sites must be notified. The Service Area Administrator must be notified so the electronic record is reopened. The Billing Supervisor must be notified so that the flag is removed from the computer.
- If a request for reinstatement is denied: The patient is notified in writing. Appropriate staff must be informed.

Approved:



Cheyenne Spetzler
Chief Operations Officer

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Withdraw From Patient Care Protocol: