

ED Patient Liaison Policies and Procedures

I. Emergency Department (ED) Patient Liaison Volunteers

- A. Purpose
 - i. To provide a positive experience by acting as a liaison between ED staff, family, and visitors.
 - ii. To assist ED Staff in non-medical duties as needed.
- B. Qualifications
 - i. At least 18 years old.
 - ii. Possess good interpersonal skills and able to relate to a broad range of personalities and to communicate effectively.
 - iii. Be professional, sensitive, dependable, polite, compassionate, patient, friendly, energetic, and responsive to the staff, patients, families, and visitors.
 - iv. Demonstrate initiative, common sense, maturity, and active listening skills.
 - v. Ability to prioritize needs.
 - vi. Ability to follow directions from supervisor.
 - vii. Commitment to four four-hour shifts per month.
 - viii. Attendance at quarterly Patient Liaison meetings. **Absence from more than two consecutive meetings without a valid reason is cause for release from the program.**
 - ix. Successful completion of an oral interview and the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center Volunteer Services application process.
 - x. If a student, completion of at least 100 volunteer hours in another department at UCLA Medical Center.
 - xi. Commitment of a minimum of two years to the program.
- C. Duties
 - i. Act as host/hostess for the ED, making patients, families, and visitors feel welcome and comfortable.
 - ii. Provide for reasonable patient requests after consulting with the attending nurse.
 - iii. Provide general information as requested by families and visitors after consulting with ED staff.
 - iv. Assist with children of patients when family/friends are not available.
 - v. Provide information on availability of non-medical community information (i.e., restaurants, housing, pharmacies, etc.).
 - vi. Notify the charge nurse of urgent patient, family, or visitor concerns.
 - vii. Provide assistance as needed in non-medical situations as requested by ED staff.
- D. Training
 - i. Completion of four four-hour shadow/orientation shifts and satisfactory performance during a probationary period.
 - ii. Completion of a classroom training session taught by the ED Patient Liaison Coordinator.
 - iii. Review of the following Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center policies:
 - a. UCLA Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center and ED Mission Statements
 - b. ED and Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center geography
 - c. ED services offered
 - d. Patient Liaison Roles and Responsibilities
 - e. Patient confidentiality.
 - f. Personal safety issues
 - g. Case studies stressing interpersonal skills, policies, and procedures.
- E. Shift Schedule
 - i. Shifts of four hours in length are available at 6 am, 10 am, 2 pm, 6 pm, 10 pm, and 2 am seven days a week.
 - ii. Liaisons may sign up for shifts at the quarterly Patient Liaison meeting or may contact the ED Patient Liaison Coordinator or his/her designate.
 - iii. The ED Patient Liaison Coordinator or his/her designate must be notified of any changes to the shift schedule.
 - iv. Priority in filling shifts should be given to nights and weekends.

- v. A maximum of two Liaisons may sign up for regular duty (i.e., not including those in training) per shift.

F. Supervision

- i. The immediate supervisor for the Patient Liaison while on duty is the ED Charge Nurse on duty at the time.
- ii. The supervisor for the Patient Liaison program overall is the ED Patient Liaison Coordinator.

II. Orientation

A. Prospective Patient Liaisons must complete a minimum of four shadow/orientation shifts plus a classroom training session.

- i. The first shift (S) shall consist of shadowing an experienced Patient Liaison while the experienced Liaison performs normal duties. Following this shift, the experienced Liaison shall provide to the ED Patient Liaison Coordinator or his/her designate an evaluation of the prospective Liaison with attention to the following areas:
 - a. how he/she interacted with the staff
 - b. how he/she interacted with the patients and their families
 - c. how interested he/she was in watching medical procedures vs. helping patients
 - d. how interested he/she was in what the experienced Liaison was doing
 - e. whether additional shadowing shifts should be performed
- ii. Following the satisfactory completion of a shadowing shift, the prospective Liaison must attend a classroom training session taught by the ED Patient Liaison Coordinator or his/her designate.
- iii. The first orientation (O1) shift shall occur after the classroom training session, shall be scheduled between 6 am and 6 pm, and will consist of:
 - a. 1 hour at the triage desk with the triage nurse.
 - b. ½ hour at the registration area.
 - c. ½ hour in the central work area with the clerks.
 - d. 1 hour shadowing the Charge Nurse.
 - e. 1 hour shadowing a nurse assigned by the Charge Nurse.
- iv. The second orientation (O2) shift shall be scheduled between 6 pm and 6 am and will consist of:
 - a. 1 hour at the triage desk with the triage nurse.
 - b. ½ hour in the central work area with the clerks.
 - c. ½ hour shadowing a medical technician assigned by the Charge Nurse.
 - d. ½ hour shadowing the attending physician.
 - e. ½ hour shadowing a resident assigned by the attending physician.
 - f. ½ hour shadowing a nurse assigned by the Charge Nurse.
 - g. ½ hour shadowing the Charge Nurse.
- v. Following the O2 shift, the prospective Liaison shall contact the ED Patient Liaison Coordinator or his/her designate to schedule the final training shift (O3), which shall be a trial shift where an experienced Liaison observes the prospective Liaison perform normal duties. Following this shift, the experienced Liaison shall provide to the ED Patient Liaison Coordinator or his/her designate an evaluation of the prospective Liaison with attention to similar areas observed during the initial shadowing shift.

- B. The primary goals of the S, O1, and O2 shifts are to observe, ask questions, and learn about the different job responsibilities and operating procedures of the ED. **During these shifts, the prospective Liaison should be wearing an “I’m in Training” badge and should NOT be performing normal Liaison duties.**

III. Patient Liaison Uniforms

- A. While on duty in the ED, Patient Liaisons shall wear:
 - i. Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center identification badge.
 - ii. ED Patient Liaison "How May I Help You" badge.
 - iii. ED Patient Liaison dark blue jacket.
 - iv. White blouse or shirt with a collar.

- v. Slacks (khaki)
- vi. Sensible shoes (no multi-colors).
- vii. No hats.
- viii. No tank tops.
- ix. No jewelry that is loose, noisy, or distracting.
- x. Nothing too similar to the uniforms of medical personnel (i.e., all white clothing or scrubs)

IV. Patient Liaison Shift Responsibilities

- A. When reporting for a scheduled shift, the Patient Liaison shall:
 - i. Arrive on time and in uniform.
 - ii. Ensure the blanket warmers are stocked (in trauma rooms).
 - iii. Turn on and carry the Patient Liaison phone. Remember to sign in and out for liaison phone.
 - iv. Ensure the patient refrigerator has an adequate supply of juice.
 - v. Ensure there is coffee in the staff lounge.
 - vi. Sign in on the Medical Center Computer or sign-in book.
Check in with the Patient Liaison going off duty (if applicable).
 - vii. Check in with the Charge Nurse and the CWA clerks.
Circulate around the ED performing Liaison duties, following the guidelines listed in Appendix A.
 - viii. Periodically check in with the Charge Nurse to see if he/she needs any assistance.
- B. At the conclusion of a scheduled shift, the Patient Liaison shall:
 - i. Check out with the Charge Nurse and CWA clerks.
 - ii. Check in with the Patient Liaison coming on duty (if applicable).
 - iii. Sign out on the Medical Center Computer or the sign-in binder.
 - iv. Turn off the Patient Liaison phone and return it to its holder.
- C. If unable to make a scheduled shift on time, the Patient Liaison must notify the CWA clerks at: 310-267-8407.
- D. If unable to make a scheduled shift at all, the Patient Liaison should make every attempt to find another Liaison to take his/her place. If unable to find a replacement, the Liaison must notify both the CWA clerks at: **310-267-8407** and the ED Patient Liaison Coordinator or his/her designate: Anna at **310-267-8430** or Art at **310-267-8431**. If you know your schedule in advance, it is always a good policy to send an email to the ListServe announcing you are unable to cover your shift and ask if anyone else would like to cover it. If a Liaison repeatedly fails to make a scheduled shift and fails to notify these people, the ED Patient Liaison Coordinator or his/her designate may remove the Liaison from the regular schedule until the Liaison can demonstrate proper dependability.
- E. If the Patient Liaison must leave the ED before the end of his/her scheduled shift, he/she must notify the Charge Nurse and CWA clerks.
- F. Patient Liaisons completing a shift between 6 pm and 1 am may request a hospital escort to their vehicles by calling 310/794-9255.

V. ED Incidents Involving Patient Liaisons

- A. Any serious incidents involving Patient Liaisons (i.e., unprofessional behavior, accidents, etc.) must be reported immediately to the charge nurse and the ED Patient Liaison Coordinator.

VI. ED Patient Visitors

- A. One visitor per patient may be allowed into the patient's room with the approval of the attending nurse.
 - i. More visitors may be allowed at the discretion of the attending nurse.
 - ii. Visitors who accompany a patient when the patient is initially brought back to his/her room should be told that they might be asked to wait in the waiting room while the medical staff is attending to the patient.
 - iii. Any visitor whose presence is disrupting patient care may be asked to move to the waiting room or to leave the hospital entirely.
- B. Effort should be made to protect the privacy of patients.

- i. Visitors waiting on another patient may be asked to move while the medical staff is attending to a patient in the same vicinity.
- ii. Visitors in the ED may be asked to return to the waiting room. Staff prefer no family standing around outside patient rooms.

VII. Patient-related Phone Calls from the ED

- A. ED visitors needing to make phone calls should first be directed to the pay phones near the ED reception area.
- B. The Patient Liaison may make phone calls for patients or visitors unable to use the pay phones.
 - i. Using Liaison phone, a limit of two calls per patient or visitor should be observed, depending on conditions in the ED. The new RRUCLA ED rooms have their own telephones for patient use as well.
 - ii. The length of phone calls using Liaison phone should be limited to five minutes.
- C. If the Patient Liaison needs to make a personal call, he/she should use the phone at the Security desk, rather than the portable phone.

VIII. Center for Pre-Hospital Care Courses

- A. Patient Liaisons who have completed their initial training may take the Basic Cardiac Life Support or Heartsaver CPR course free of charge (pending space availability) at the UCLA Center for Pre-Hospital Care (CPC) by requesting the course through the ED Patient Liaison Coordinator or his/her designate.
- B. Patient Liaisons who have completed at least 100 hours in the program following their initial training may take other classes free of charge at the UCLA CPC using the following procedure:
 - i. The Liaison must make a written request to the ED Patient Liaison Coordinator or his/her designate and gain their approval.
 - ii. The CPC Director must then approve the request.
 - iii. Space must be available in the course requested.
 - iv. Following the CPC Director's approval, the Liaison must fill out the standard course application and forward it to the CPC.
 - v. The Liaison must pay for any book, lab or certification fees.

Appendix A--Dos and Do nots***Do***

- **Do** make sure you arrive on your scheduled shift on time.
- **Do** arrive properly groomed in clean designated uniform with proper identification.
- **Do** report directly to the ED charge nurse and CWA clerks at the beginning of your shift.
- **Do** contact both the charge nurse and ED Patient Liaison Coordinator (or his/her designate) if for any reason you are unable to make your scheduled shift.
- **Do** perform duties as delineated with a positive, friendly attitude.
- **Do** be proactive—seek to help and assist before being asked.
- **Do** always wash your hands when you arrive and between physical contact with patients.
- **Do** notify the charge nurse and CWA clerks if you must leave the ED and at the end of your shift.
- **Do** notify the charge nurse if you are injured or exposed to any potential blood-borne pathogen.
- **Do** ask questions if you are unsure of anything.

Do not

- **Do not** report for a shift if not scheduled.
- **Do not** leave the ED to escort patients, fetch food trays, or do other non-Liaison duties unless specifically asked to do so by the charge nurse.
- **Do not** miss a scheduled shift without notifying both the CWA clerks and ED Patient Liaison Coordinator (or his/her designate).
- **Do not** give confidential patient information to anyone.
- **Do not** give patients food or drink—even water—without permission of the nurse/doctor taking care of the patient.
- **Do not** lift or help lift patients without the direct supervision of ED staff.
- **Do not** answer any telephone other than the Patient Liaison phone unless otherwise directed by ED staff.
- **Do not** handle patients' valuables.
- **Do not** dispose of contaminated waste (urine, blood, vomit, etc.).
- **Do not** enter a room of a patient that is under psychiatric hold or under police custody unless given permission by the attending nurse or doctor.
- **Do not** put yourself in a position where you are uncomfortable or feel endangered. [If you find yourself in one of these situations, seek assistance from the charge nurse.]
- **Do not** be confrontational. [Ask the charge nurse or ED Patient Liaison Coordinator (or his/her designate) for assistance with any problems.]
- **Do not** hesitate to ask questions or offer suggestions.
- **Do not** leave the Patient Liaison locker unlocked.
- **Do not** sleep while on duty (if you must rest, go to the staff lounge).
- **Do not** drive a patient's vehicle **or** transport a patient in your personal vehicle. [The charge nurse or Registration clerks can assist patients who need a vehicle moved or a ride home.]
- **Do not** end your shift without notifying the charge nurse and the CWA clerks.