


Name of Policy: <u>Managing Staff Requests Not to Participate in Aspects of Patient Care</u> Policy Number: 3364-100-50-22 Department: Hospital Administration Approving Officer: Chief Executive Officer - UTM Responsible Agent: Director, HRTD Operations Scope: The University of Toledo Medical Center	 Effective Date: July 1, 2020 Original Effective Date: July 15, 1996
<input type="checkbox"/> New policy proposal <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision of existing policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor/technical revision of existing policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reaffirmation of existing policy

(A) Policy Statement

The University of Toledo Medical Center (“UTMC”) understands that situations may arise in which the prescribed care or course of treatment for a patient may be in conflict with the cultural values, ethics or religious beliefs of a staff member. An employee may request to be relieved from participating in an aspect of a patient's care or treatment in situations where the prescribed care or treatment presents a conflict with the employee's cultural values, ethics or religious beliefs. Patients should not be made aware that an employee has a conflict with the patient's treatments. UTMC will attempt to reasonably accommodate requests for exclusion from patient care or treatment resulting from such a conflict unless doing so would impose undue hardship or negatively affect patient care. Care and treatment will be provided to all persons in need without regard to disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, diagnosis, lifestyle, or ability to pay.

(B) Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish a mechanism by which an employee may request to be excused from participating in an aspect of a patient's care or treatment in situations where the prescribed care or treatment presents a conflict with an employee's cultural values, ethics or religious beliefs. Aspects of care that might conflict with an employee's cultural values, ethics or religious beliefs include withdrawal of life support treatment, termination of pregnancy, or participating in research studies.

(C) Procedure

1. When a prescribed course of care or treatment conflicts with an employee's cultural values, ethics or religious beliefs, the employee will immediately notify his/her supervisor or manager and request to be excluded from participating in the care or treatment. As permitted by the situation, the request must be submitted in writing as soon as reasonably possible. Requests must include the specific aspects of care from which the staff member is asking to be excused and the reasons for making the request.
2. The supervisor or manager will determine whether or not the request is justified and can be granted. Human Resources may be contacted to provide consultation as needed in making the decision. The House Supervisor should be contacted on off-shifts. If alternative staffing arrangements can be made and the request is granted, the supervisor or manager will reassign responsibilities amongst staff members to eliminate the conflict. Reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to, changing the employee's schedule, reassigning the patient to an equally competent employee with the appropriate skill level to adequately address the patient's needs, or transferring the requesting employee to another unit/department.
3. The requesting employee is responsible for providing appropriate patient care until alternate arrangements can be made. Refusal to provide such care will result in corrective action up to and including termination. In no circumstances will a request be granted if it is felt that doing so would negatively affect the care of the patient. Therefore, staffing limitations may make it impossible to grant a request.
4. Documentation of the employee request and the supervisor's determination and accommodations (if made) will be forwarded to the Human Resources Department.
5. An employee in a situation experiencing ongoing conflict of care issues should seek a transfer to a department or position where conflict of care issues are less likely to occur.

