

Medical Staff Bylaws, Rules and Regulations 2026



st. Joseph Healthcare
St. Joseph Hospital

A Member of Covenant Health

St. Joseph Hospital 360 Broadway, Bangor, Maine 04401
A Member of Covenant Health Systems – Founded by the Felician Sisters

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Medical Staff Bylaws, Rules and Regulations

**St. Joseph Hospital
Bangor, Maine**

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS St. Joseph Hospital is a nonprofit corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Maine, and,

WHEREAS its purpose is to serve as a general hospital providing patient care, and education; and,

WHEREAS it is recognized that the Medical Staff is responsible for the quality of medical care in the Hospital, and associated outpatient medical practices, and must accept and discharge this responsibility subject to the ultimate authority of the Hospital's Board of Trustees, and,

WHEREAS it is recognized that the interests of patients attended in the Hospital and the associated outpatient medical practices are best served by the concerted effort of the Medical Staff.

NOW, THEREFORE the Medical Staff formulates Bylaws, Rules and Regulations for its governance in conformity with the Bylaws of the Hospital.

These Bylaws, Rules and Regulations shall be at all times in conformity with the laws and statutes of the State of Maine, CMS Medicare Conditions of Participation and in conformity with the Hospital's Articles of Incorporation. In the event of a conflict between these Bylaws, Rules and Regulations and the Articles of Incorporation and/or the Bylaws of the Hospital, the latter shall prevail.

Every member of the Medical Staff, by virtue of accepting such membership, shall demonstrate their voluntary intention to practice their profession in the Hospital in accordance with the Roman Catholic moral and ethical principles and values enunciated in the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services, 6th edition, as may be revised from time-to-time.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of these Bylaws, Rules and Regulations the following terms shall have the following meanings:

Admit: Means to order the admission of a person to the Hospital for bed occupancy for purposes of receiving inpatient hospital services. Generally, a patient is considered an inpatient if formally admitted as an inpatient with the expectation that they will remain at least overnight and occupy a bed even though it later develops that the patient can be discharged or transferred to another hospital and not actually use a hospital bed overnight. For purposes of these Bylaws, admission does not include an Observation Stay.

Board: Board means the Board of Trustees of St. Joseph Hospital.

Hospital: Hospital means St. Joseph Hospital, of Bangor, Maine as well as its hospital-based and managed outpatient clinics.

Medical Care: Encompasses the field of total medical, dental, and other professional care, the evaluation and management of health as well as disease management, using supporting personnel, services, and facilities at the level of the Member and their patients.

Medical Education: Education in all disciplines, specialties, and at all levels, in all of the professional and technical fields that can contribute to the effectiveness of health and medical care. It is not limited to the education of physicians and dentists.

Medical Executive Committee: The Executive Committee of the Medical Staff unless specific reference is made to the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Medical Staff: The formal organization that includes all Physicians and Allied Health Staff who may be granted clinical privileges at the Hospital.

Member: Member means any individual appointed to the Medical Staff by authority of the Board in accordance with these Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and associated policies, and the Bylaws of the Hospital.

Observation Stay: Means a stay in the Hospital for no more than forty-eight (48) hours for the purpose of (a) evaluating a patient for possible admission; (b) treating patients expected to be stabilized and released in no more than twenty-four (24) hours; or (c) extended recovery following a complication of an outpatient procedure. Only rarely will an Observation Stay exceed twenty-four (24) hours in length.

Patient Care Encounter: Means acting in the capacity of the primary attending physician, in the capacity of a consulting physician, performing surgical procedures, and providing hospital-based services including, but not limited to pathology, radiology, or emergency services. A patient care encounter shall not, however, include orders for outpatient x-ray or laboratory testing which does not directly involve the ordering physician in the delivery of the service.

Physician: means a Doctor of Medicine (MD), Doctor of Osteopathy (DO), Doctor of Podiatric Medicine (DPM), Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) or Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD).

Practitioner: Practitioner means an appropriately licensed Physician or other licensed or registered health care professional who has maintained competency in a discipline which the Board has determined to grant clinical privileges to practice within the Hospital or in an outpatient setting.

Special Notice: Means written notification sent to the last known address of the recipient, as it appears in the records of the Hospital, postage pre-paid by United States certified mail, return receipt requested.

VPMA: VPMA means the Hospital's Vice President of Medical Affairs.

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this organization shall be the "Medical Staff of St. Joseph Hospital, Bangor, Maine", hereinafter sometimes referred to as the "Medical Staff" or as the "Staff".

ARTICLE II

PURPOSES

The purpose of this organization shall be as follows:

- a. To pursue quality care and patient safety for all patients evaluated and/or treated in the Hospital, inpatient and outpatient, irrespective of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, creed, disability, national origin, religion, health status, ability to pay or source of payment.
- b. To establish and maintain high professional and ethical standards in general conformity with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, accreditation standards, Medicare Conditions of Participation, the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services, 6th edition, as may be revised from time to time, and Hospital policies.
- c. To ensure the clinical work of the staff is guided by the principles of continuous quality improvement, patient safety, regular peer review of the clinical work of its members, and ethical professional practice.
- d. Upon request, to assist the Board in all matters pertaining to the wellbeing of the Hospital.
- e. To serve as the primary means for accountability to the Board for the appropriateness of the Medical Staff's professional performance and ethical conduct.
- f. To maintain a high level of performance by Medical Staff members through appropriate delineation of staff privileges, and the ongoing and focused evaluation of its members.
- g. To provide a means whereby issues of a medical administrative nature may be discussed and resolved among the Medical Staff, the Board and Hospital administration.
- h. To provide and maintain such medical education and educational standards as are approved by the Board.
- i. To support such programs associated with community public health needs as are deemed appropriate by the Board.
- j. To uphold and support the mission of St. Joseph Hospital, which is committed to wellness promotion and holistic healing, providing healthcare services which embody Compassion, Competence and Community. St. Joseph Hospital, under the sponsorship of Covenant Health Systems, is an extended ministry of Christ's healing and mercy. This healthcare ministry is rooted in the tradition of our Foundress Blessed Mary Angela's vision of spirituality - renewing society through compassionate caring of the whole person in all circumstances.

Therefore, St. Joseph Hospital believes in:

- * Pursuing excellence in the care and wellness of the whole person, body, mind and soul, throughout the continuum of life from conception through death.
- * Fostering a spiritual environment in which all people feel welcome.
- * Supporting the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services.
- * Creating an atmosphere of respect and dignity.
- * Encouraging personal and professional growth for all employees.
- * Promoting social justice and access to healthcare for the poor and disadvantaged.
- * Collaborating with others to enhance community healthcare services.

ARTICLE III

MEDICAL STAFF MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. Nature of Medical Staff Membership

Membership on the Medical Staff is a privilege extended by the Board only to those individuals judged by their peers to be of good character, qualified and competent in their respective fields who continuously meet the qualification standards and requirements set forth in these Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and the Bylaws of St. Joseph Hospital.

SECTION 2. Qualifications for Membership

- a. Only individuals currently licensed or authorized to practice in the State of Maine, who can document their background, experience, training and demonstrated competence, adherence to their professional ethics, their good reputation, and their ability to work with others with sufficient adequacy to ensure the Medical Staff and the Board that any patient treated by them will be given high quality medical care, shall be qualified for membership on the Medical Staff.
- b. No individual shall be entitled to membership on the Medical Staff or to the exercise of particular clinical privileges in the Hospital merely by virtue of the fact that they are duly licensed to practice in this or any other State, or that they are a member of any professional organization, certified by any specialty board or have attained fellowship or membership in a specialty body or society or that they have had in the past, or presently have, such privileges at another hospital.
- c. All applicants for privileges to treat patients in the Hospital must practice within a reasonable distance of the Hospital. Any exception to this rule must be made by the Medical Executive Committee and approved by the Board. Reasonable distance shall be defined by the Medical Executive Committee whenever necessary.
- d. No applicant shall be denied appointment to the Medical Staff on the basis of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, creed, disability, national origin, religion, and health status.

SECTION 3. Member Ethics, Principles and Responsibilities

Acceptance of membership on the Medical Staff shall constitute the Member's agreement that they will strictly abide by and be accountable for the following ethics, principles and responsibilities.

- a. To abide by the most recent edition of the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services, the Code of Medical Ethics of the American Medical Association or of the American Osteopathic Association as applicable, the Code of Ethics of each physician's medical specialty board, or other ethical principles established by the member's profession.

- b. To abide by the Medical Staff Bylaws, Rules and Regulations and all other lawful standards, policies and rules of the Medical Staff and the Hospital.
- c. To comply with all applicable State and Federal laws and to render care to patients that is consistent with applicable professional standards of quality and appropriateness.
- d. To not engage in the practice of division of fees under any guise whatsoever; not to receive from, or pay to, another Physician or any other person, either directly or indirectly, any part of a fee received for professional services except as otherwise authorized by Federal, State, or local statutory or administrative law.
- e. To disclose any personal or professional conflicts of interest in fulfilling any of the functions of the Medical Staff or in the provision of patient care.
- f. To participate in peer review, ethical standards and quality management activities and to refrain from harassing those who are participating in such activities.
- g. To discharge such Medical Staff, Department, Service and committee functions for which they are responsible by appointment, election or otherwise.
- h. To prepare and complete, in a timely manner, the medical records and any other required documentation for all patients to whom the Medical Staff in any way provides services in the Hospital or associated outpatient practices and maintaining confidentiality of patient-identifiable information (written or verbal) consistent with all State and Federal confidentiality laws and regulations.
- i. To refrain from any unlawful harassment or discrimination against any person (including any patient, Hospital employee, Hospital independent contractor, Member, volunteer or visitor) based upon the person's age, gender, sexual orientation, race, creed, disability, national origin, religion, health status, ability to pay or source of payment.
- j. To delegate responsibility for diagnosis or care of hospitalized patients only to a Member or, Member in training who is qualified to undertake this responsibility and who is adequately supervised.
- k. To actively participate in and regularly cooperate with the Medical Staff in assisting the Hospital to fulfill its obligations relating to patient care and education including, but not limited to, patient safety, continuous quality improvement, peer review, utilization management, quality evaluation and related monitoring activities required of the Medical Staff, and in discharging such other functions as may be required from time to time.
- l. To ensure no Member may delegate to a commercial or other referral service, or a professional corporation or any other legal entity, the staff privileges assigned to them, including but not limited to the admission of patients to the Hospital.

- m. To not engage in disruptive behavior as it is inappropriate and unprofessional under any circumstances, whether or not it directly involves patient care and safety. All Members are expected to demonstrate the ability to work cooperatively with the Hospital, its staff and Medical Staff, and to refrain from disruptive behavior which could interfere with patient care, quality and safety, or the operation of the healthcare organization.
- n. To complete continuing medical education (CME) that is appropriate and/or required by the Member's specialty or licensure.
- o. To participate in emergency service coverage and serve on the service roster for unassigned patients as required by the Bylaws.
- p. To cooperate with the Medical Staff in assisting the Hospital to meet its uncompensated or partially compensated patient care obligations.
- q. To continuously inform the Medical Staff of any significant changes in the information required for appointment or reappointment.
- r. To continuously meet the qualifications for membership as set forth in the Medical Staff Bylaws. A Member may be required to demonstrate ongoing satisfaction of any of the requirements of the Bylaws upon reasonable request of the Medical Executive Committee or Credentials Committee.
- s. To pay Medical Staff dues when due as established annually by the Medical Executive Committee.

SECTION 4. Medical Staff Rights

- a. In the event a Member disagrees with a decision of the Department Chief, Service Leader, Medical Director, and/or Lead Physician, or a Medical Staff committee, and after all attempts to resolve the matter have been pursued with the Department Chief, Service Leader, Medical Director, and/or Lead Physician, or the Medical Staff committee, the Member is entitled to request an independent review of the matter by the Medical Executive Committee.

SECTION 5. Conditions and Duration of Appointment and Reappointment

- a. Initial appointment shall be provisional for a period of approximately one year from the date temporary privileges or final Board approval is granted. Reappointments shall be for a period not to exceed thirty-six (36) months.
- b. Reporting Requirements
Members have a continuing obligation to promptly notify the Hospital President in writing immediately after and provide such additional information as may be requested regarding each of the following:

1. Revocation or suspension of their professional license or certification,
2. Imposition of terms of probation or other limitations or conditions of practice imposed by any State licensing authority,
3. Loss or suspension of staff membership at any hospital or other health care institution or after receiving any adverse disciplinary or corrective action at any hospital or health care facility,
4. Modification of any or all clinical privileges at any hospital or health care institution as a result of Professional Review Action, or the surrender of such privileges while under investigation by such institution in consideration for an agreement not to conduct such review or investigation,
5. Receipt of notice of a hearing to be held before the applicable State licensing authority to consider a complaint against the Member,
6. Filing of any civil action in any state, federal or foreign court in which medical malpractice is alleged to have been committed by the Member, but excluding any notice of claim that must, in accordance with applicable law, be filed prior to the commencement of a civil suit,
7. Being subject to a criminal complaint or indictment,
8. Revocation of DEA registration,
9. Payment or agreement to pay on their behalf or for their benefit any amount in full or partial settlement of a medical malpractice claim or action, including payments made under an insurance policy or self-insurance plan, or
10. Receipt of notice of any proposed, actual or pending debarment action, exclusion or other event that may make the Member ineligible to participate in any state or federal health care program.

The Manager of the Medical Staff Office in concert with the Director of Quality/PI, the President, the VPMA, the Chair of the Credentials Committee and the Chief of the respective Service will review all reports and triage based on significance and impact on patient safety or quality. Reports deemed significant will be referred to the Professional Practice Evaluation Committee for further review, with the Committee submitting its findings to the Credentials Committee.

SECTION 6. Leave of Absence

- a. **Voluntary Leave of Absence.** A Member may request a voluntary leave of absence for any absence expected to exceed thirty (30) days by submitting a written request to the Medical Staff Office, for transmittal to the Medical Executive Committee, setting forth the reason for the leave and the proposed starting date and duration of the leave. During a leave of absence, which may not exceed one (1) year, the Member's clinical privileges and prerogatives shall be suspended, and all obligations shall be waived. The Member must provide evidence of current malpractice insurance coverage with occurrence coverage or tail coverage in the minimal amount required under these Bylaws during the leave of absence. A Member, requesting a voluntary leave of absence extending beyond their reappointment period, shall reapply for and be granted Medical Staff membership and clinical privileges consistent with the reappointment process set forth in Article VI of these Bylaws, prior to their return to service.

- b. **Medical Executive Committee Action.** The Medical Executive Committee shall review the request for voluntary leave and recommend that the Board approve the leave for any reason acceptable to the Committee including, but not limited to, parental leave or leave to undertake additional medical education or training. If the Medical Executive Committee recommends denial of the request, the Member may appeal the decision to the Board. The Board shall consider the appeal at its earliest opportunity and its decision shall be final.

- c. **Termination of Voluntary Leave of Absence.** At least forty-five (45) days prior to the termination of a voluntary leave of absence, the Member may request reinstatement of their clinical privileges and prerogatives by submitting a written request for reinstatement to the Medical Staff Office for transmittal to the Medical Executive Committee. The request shall contain a brief written summary of their relevant activities during the leave. The Medical Executive Committee shall make a recommendation to the Board concerning the reinstatement of the Member's clinical privileges and prerogatives. Failure, without good cause, to request reinstatement in accordance with this section shall be considered a voluntary resignation of Medical Staff membership and clinical privileges and shall not entitle the Member to the procedural rights set forth in Article VIII of these Bylaws. A request for reinstatement of Medical Staff membership and clinical privileges following such voluntary resignation shall be submitted and processed in the same manner as an application for initial appointment.

- d. **Medical Leave of Absence.** A Member may apply for a medical leave of absence if, as a consequence of a diagnosed physical or mental health condition, they are unable to carry out the duties and responsibilities of staff membership for a period of time that is likely to exceed three (3) months. The Member shall apply for a medical leave of absence using the format outlined for voluntary leaves of absence as set forth in these Bylaws. During the medical leave of absence, the Member's staff obligations shall be waived. The Medical Executive Committee shall determine whether conditions should be attached to the Member's reinstatement following the medical leave. A Physician's statement shall be provided prior to reinstatement, stating that the Member is able to return to their previous level of activity either without conditions or with appropriate practice limitations related to the Member's physical or mental health.

ARTICLE IV

MEDICAL STAFF CATEGORIES

SECTION 1. Categories

The Medical Staff shall be divided into Active, Active Outpatient, Courtesy, Consulting, Honorary Staff, and Allied Health categories.

SECTION 2. Active Staff

The Active Staff is comprised of Physicians.

- a. **Qualifications.** Active Staff shall consist of Physicians who Admit, order Observation Stays, attend and provide a significant portion of their clinical work at the Hospital. In addition to the qualifications/responsibilities for Medical Staff membership set forth in Article III, Sections 2 and 3, each Active Staff member shall:
 1. Reside or have a clinic office within close proximity of the Hospital to provide continuous care to their patients; and respond in a timely manner to meet patient care needs;
 2. Participate in the on-call coverage requirements established for each specialty as determined by the Medical Executive Committee to assist in meeting the patient care needs of the community;
 3. Serve on at least one Medical Staff committee if requested and participate, as necessary, in conducting Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluations and Focused Professional Practice Evaluations as assigned by the Medical Executive Committee; and
 4. Have a minimum of twenty-four (24) Patient Care Encounters in a calendar year.

- b. **Prerogatives of Active Staff Members.** The prerogatives of the Active Staff shall include:
 1. Admitting patients to the Hospital and ordering Observation Stays without limitation,
 2. Voting on all matters presented at general and special meetings of the Medical Staff, Medical Staff committees, and the Department of which they are a member,
 3. Serving as an officer of the Medical Staff, and
 4. Serving as Committee Chair, Department Chief or other position within the organized Medical Staff.

SECTION 3. Active Outpatient Staff

- a. **Qualifications.** Active Outpatient Staff shall consist of Physicians who are regularly involved in outpatient care at the Hospital and who use the Hospital as the primary hospital for their patients requiring inpatient care. In addition to the qualifications/responsibilities for Medical Staff membership set forth in Article III, Sections 2 and 3, each Active Outpatient Staff member shall:

1. Make acceptable arrangements for coverage of their patients who are admitted to the Hospital; and
2. Participate, on an equitable basis, in providing care to unassigned patients requiring outpatient follow-up.

b. **Prerogatives.** The prerogatives of the Active Outpatient Staff shall include:

1. Ordering an Observation Stay without limitation,
2. Voting on all matters presented at general and special meetings of the Medical Staff, Medical Staff committees, and the Department of which they are a member,
3. Serving as an officer of the Medical Staff, and
4. Serving as Committee Chair, Department Chief or other position within the organized Medical Staff.

SECTION 4. Courtesy Staff

a. **Qualifications.** Courtesy Staff shall consist of Physicians who do not perform a significant portion of their clinical work at the Hospital. In addition to the qualifications/responsibilities for Medical Staff membership set forth in Article III, Section 2 and 3, each Courtesy Staff Member shall:

1. Maintain active staff privileges in good standing at another hospital; and
2. Have fewer than twenty-four (24) Patient Care Encounters in a calendar year. In the event a Courtesy Staff member exceeds twenty-four (24) patient care encounters in a calendar year, the Medical Executive Committee shall have the option of advancing the member to the Active Staff category which will require the Member to accept the responsibilities associated with that category.

b. **Prerogatives.** The prerogatives of the Courtesy Staff shall include:

1. Admitting patients to the Hospital and ordering Observation Stays for patients subject to the Patient Care Encounter limitation set forth in Article IV, Section 4 A.2 of these Bylaws. At times of full Hospital occupancy or of shortages of Hospital beds or other facilities, as determined by the Hospital President, the admitting privileges of Courtesy Staff Members shall be subordinate to those of Active Staff and Active Outpatient Staff Members, except for emergency admissions, and
2. Attending meetings of the Medical Staff, and of Committees, and the Department of which they are a member without voting rights or eligibility to hold Medical Staff office.

SECTION 5. Consulting Staff

a. **Qualifications.** Consulting Staff shall consist of Physicians who provide consultation in the diagnosis and treatment of patients and the administration of clinical services at the Hospital. Consulting Staff members shall meet the basic qualifications/responsibilities for Medical Staff membership set forth in Article III, Section 2 and 3.

- b. **Prerogatives.** Consulting Staff shall not have admitting privileges or the prerogative to order an Observation Stay and shall not be entitled to vote, hold Medical Staff office, or serve on Medical Staff Committees. Consulting Staff are encouraged, but not required, to attend Medical Staff meetings, Department meetings and Medical Staff and Hospital educational programs.

SECTION 6. Honorary Staff

- a. **Qualifications.** Honorary Staff shall consist of Members who have retired from active hospital practice, who are recognized for their outstanding reputation, noteworthy contributions, or previous longstanding service to the Hospital. Honorary Staff do not apply for appointment or reappointment. The Medical Executive Committee or Medical Staff may nominate individuals to Honorary Staff and such nominations shall be forwarded to the Board. The Board may approve, deny or terminate Honorary Staff status and its decision is final and not subject to the hearing and appellate review requirements set forth in these Bylaws.
- b. **Prerogatives.** Honorary Staff shall not be eligible to Admit, order an Observation Stay or treat patients, vote, or hold Medical Staff office, but may be invited to attend and serve on hospital and Medical Staff Committees except the Medical Executive Committee and those portions of meetings devoted to peer review.

SECTION 7. Allied Health Staff

- a. **Qualifications.** Allied Health Staff shall consist of non-Physician Medical Staff members who have maintained competency in a discipline which the Board has determined to grant clinical privileges to practice within the Hospital or in an outpatient setting. Practitioners in this category have a recognized but limited scope of practice within medicine and are licensed or certified and permitted to provide patient care as delineated in the privileges granted, either independently (i.e. without supervision), or in a medical support role requiring supervision.
- b. **Prerogatives.** The prerogatives of the Allied Health Staff shall include:
 - 1. Attending meetings of the Medical Staff, Committees, and Department of which they are a member with voting rights but without eligibility to hold Medical Staff office.
- c. **Additional Qualifications for Physician Associates.** Graduation from a Physician Associate program accredited by the American Medical Association Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation, or the Commission for Accreditation of the Allied Health Education Programs, or the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Associate (ARC-PA) or their successors; and/or who has passed the certifying examination administered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Associates (NCCPA). Physician Associates with less than four thousand (4,000) hours of documented clinical practice must have either a Maine Board of Licensure in Medicine or Board of Osteopathic Licensure approved collaborative practice agreement with a physician member of the Active Staff or, if employed by the Hospital, a scope of practice agreement with the Hospital.

d. **Additional Qualifications for Nurse Practitioners.** Be a graduate of a master’s degree accredited program for advanced practice registered nurses (APRN); maintain active and valid Maine APRN licensure, maintain active and valid certification by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP), or equivalent nurse practitioner certifying body, submit a current Plan of Collaboration (POC) signed by a member of the hospital’s Medical Active Staff who holds privileges covering the clinical activity the nurse practitioner performs within the Hospital, and obtain independent practice status through the Maine Board of Nursing once qualified.

e. **Additional Qualifications for Physician-employed Surgical Assistant**

Level I - A certified surgical technologist, a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse.

1. Surgical Technologist – A graduate of an accredited school for surgical technologists or possess competence comparable to that of an individual who has graduated from an accredited school, at least two (2) years practical experience in activity area requested, and a current Plan of Supervision with a member of the hospital's Active Medical Staff. Candidates are expected to pursue certification by the Liaison Council of Certification for the Surgical Technologist, the National Assistant at Surgery Council, or similar organization, and to maintain such certification while a staff member.
2. Registered Nurse/Licensed Practical Nurse – Active and valid Maine nursing license, proficiency in perioperative nursing practice as scrub for at least two years, and a current Plan of Supervision with a member of the hospital's Active Medical Staff.

Level II - A surgical technologist first assistant, a registered nurse first assistant or physician associate.

3. Registered Nurse First Assistant (RNFA) – Active and valid Maine license, current certification in perioperative nursing (CNOR), proficiency in perioperative nursing practice as both scrub and circulator for at least five years, additional formal educational preparation specific for the role of RNFA per the Association of Operating Room Nurses' (AORN) position statement, and a current Plan of Supervision with a member of the hospital's Active Medical Staff. Candidates are expected to pursue certification as an RNFA by the National Certification Board for Preoperative Nursing and to maintain such certification while a staff member.

ARTICLE V

PROCEDURE FOR APPOINTMENT AND REAPPOINTMENT

SECTION 1. Application for Initial Appointment

- a. **Application.** All applications for appointment to the Medical Staff shall be completed, signed by the applicant; submitted on a form approved by the Board upon recommendation of the Medical Executive Committee; and shall be administratively complete. A complete application for appointment will include a current copy of the following documents:
1. valid picture ID issued by a state or federal agency (for example, a driver's license),
 2. State of Maine Professional License(s) and/or certifications,
 3. Federal Narcotics License (DEA) (if applicable),
 4. Certificate of Insurance, in an amount acceptable by the Board,
 5. a resume or curriculum vitae, whichever is appropriate, with complete professional history in chronological order by month and year,
 6. Diplomas and/or certificates documenting completion of education, as applicable, such as:
 - a) graduation from an accredited and approved U.S. or Canadian medical or dental school,
 - b) graduation from an accredited and approved foreign medical school and successful completion of an examination by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) or successor agency or by the National Board of Medical Examiners,
 - c) successful completion of an internship, residency, and/or fellowship, and
 - d) graduation from an accredited healthcare professional school,
 7. for Physicians documentation of board certification (or indicating that the applicant is pursuing and on track to achieve) by a Board included in the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS); American Osteopathic Board (AOB); American Dental Association (ADA); or the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in Canada which must be maintained continuously while appointment is in effect unless not required by specialty (e.g. Pathology). It is necessary for the applicant to maintain Board Eligibility or Board Certification within the specialty or sub-specialty (this applies only to sub-specialties with a Board certification) for which they are requesting staff status, or area of requested privileges, as deemed appropriate by the MEC. A provider needs to maintain at least one specialty certification, if applicable. Remaining Board Certified also requires current participation in a specialty's Maintenance of Certification Program (MOC), if such program exists and only if the physician does not have a lifetime Board certification status. If they fail to maintain a status of Board Eligible or Board Certified and participating in MOC (if applicable), they have one (1) year to rectify their status, per these Bylaws. Failure to rectify board status or eligibility will result in automatic voluntary relinquishment of privileges and medical staff membership. Of note, none of the preceding requirements apply to a physician who is exempt from board certification requirements due to grandfathered status. Any Physician who was a member of the Medical Staff on or before January 1, 2014, who was not board certified at any time prior to January 1, 2014, and who has not become board certified since January 1, 2014, shall be grandfathered and not

subject to these board certification and recertification requirements. The Board may, upon request of the Department Chief and recommendations of the Credentials Committee and Medical Executive Committees, waive the requirement for board certification,

8. CME transcripts/certificates,
9. copies of training logs from residency and/or fellowship training programs, if training was completed within the past five (5) years. In the event the training program did not require logs or the training was completed more than five (5) years ago, a letter from the Director of the training program that attests to appropriate training for the privileges requested and clarifying applicant's competency to perform the requested privileges, and
10. all supplemental forms provided with the Application including the request for staff category, Service/Department assignment, and clinical privileges for which the applicant wishes to be considered.

b. **Peer Recommendations.** Peer recommendations provided by the applicant shall include written information regarding the applicant's current:

1. medical/clinical knowledge,
2. technical and clinical skills,
3. clinical judgment,
4. interpersonal skills,
5. communication skills, and
6. professionalism.

c. **Applicant's Burden.** The applicant shall have the burden of producing adequate information for a proper evaluation of their competence, character, ethics and other qualifications, and for resolving any doubts about such qualifications.

d. **Undertakings.** The Application shall contain the applicant's written agreement, as a condition of consideration of Application and as a condition of continued Medical Staff appointment or clinical privileges, if granted, that the applicant:

1. Shall promptly provide the Hospital with any new or updated information that is relevant to the information required by or provided in the Application;
2. Has had an opportunity to read a current copy of the Bylaws of the Hospital, and Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Medical Staff, and that the applicant agrees to be bound by the terms thereof in all matters relating to consideration of their Application without regard to whether or not they are granted appointment or reappointment to the Medical Staff or granted clinical privileges;
3. Shall, as requested, appear for personal interviews during consideration of their Application; and
4. Acknowledges that any misrepresentation or misstatement in or omission from the Application, whether intentional or not, may constitute cause for rejection of the Application resulting in denial of appointment or reappointment and clinical privileges. In the event that clinical privileges or an appointment or reappointment has been granted

prior to the discovery of such misrepresentation, misstatement, or omission, such discovery may result in summary suspension from the Medical Staff or other corrective action provided for under these Bylaws.

- e. **Immunity; Release and Disclosure of Information.** Each applicant for appointment, reappointment, or clinical privileges, shall consent and agree to the following terms, which shall be set forth in the Application and which shall remain in full force and effect indefinitely, whether or not the Application is granted:
1. Immunity. To the fullest extent permitted by law, the applicant shall agree to release from any and all liability the Hospital, its authorized representatives, and any Third parties as defined herein, with respect to any acts or omissions, communications, documents, recommendations, or disclosures involving the applicant, including the following:
 - a) applications for appointment, reappointment or clinical privileges, including temporary, locum tenens, emergency, disaster or telemedicine privileges,
 - b) evaluations concerning reappointment or modifications of clinical privileges,
 - c) proceedings for suspension or reduction of clinical privileges, revocation of Medical Staff or Allied Health Staff appointment, or any other disciplinary action,
 - d) summary or automatic suspension,
 - e) hearings and appellate reviews,
 - f) medical care evaluations,
 - g) utilization reviews,
 - h) other activities relating to the quality of patient care or professional conduct, including, but not limited to, focused professional practice evaluations and ongoing professional practice evaluations,
 - i) matters or inquiries concerning the individual's professional qualifications, credentials, clinical competence, character, mental or emotional health, physical health, ethics, behavior, and/or
 - j) any other matter that might directly or indirectly have an effect on the applicant's competence, on patient care, or on the orderly operation of the Hospital or any other hospital or health care facility.
 2. Authorization to Obtain Information. The applicant authorizes the Hospital and its authorized representatives to consult with any Third party who may have information bearing on the applicant's professional qualifications, credentials, clinical competence, character, mental or emotional stability, physical health, ethics, behavior, or any other matter reasonably having a bearing on the applicant's satisfaction of the criteria for initial or continued appointment to the Medical Staff or grant of clinical privileges. This authorization also covers the right to inspect or obtain any and all communications, reports, records, statements, documents, recommendations, or disclosures of Third parties that may be relevant to such questions. The applicant also specifically authorizes such Third parties to release this information to the Hospital and its authorized representatives upon request.
 3. Authorization to Release Information. The applicant authorizes the Hospital and its authorized representatives to release such information to other hospitals, health care

entities, and their agents, who solicit such information for the purpose of evaluating the applicant's professional qualifications pursuant to the applicant's request for appointment or clinical privileges at such other hospitals or health care entities.

4. Definitions.

a) As used in these Bylaws the following terms are defined as follows:

- i. "Hospital and its authorized representatives" means St. Joseph Hospital and any of its Board members, officers, employees, Medical Staff, and authorized representatives, including consultants and legal counsel, who have any responsibility for obtaining information relevant to, or for evaluating an applicant's credentials, or acting upon the applicant's application; participating in Professional Competence Review Activity; or serving as a member of or assisting a Professional Competence Committee in carrying out its responsibilities.
- ii. "Third party" means any person or entity that may have information bearing on the applicant's professional qualifications, credentials, clinical competence, character, mental or emotional stability, physical health, ethics, behavior, or any other matter reasonably having a bearing on the applicant's satisfaction of the criteria for initial or continued appointment to the Medical Staff or grant of clinical privileges.
- iii. "Professional Competence Review Activity" and as defined by Maine law 24 M.R.S. § 2502(4-B) means "...study, evaluation, investigation, recommendation or action, by or on behalf of a health care entity and carried out by a professional competence committee necessary to A. Maintain or improve the quality of care rendered in, through or by the health care entity or by physicians; B. Reduce morbidity and mortality; or C. Establish and enforce appropriate standards for professional qualification, competence, conduct or performance."
- iv. "Professional Competence Committee" and as defined by Maine law, 24 M.R.S. § 2502(4) means "... any of the following when engaged in professional competence review activity: A. A health care entity; B. An individual or group, such as a medical staff officer, department or committee, to which a health care entity delegates responsibility for professional competence review activity; C. Entities and persons, including contractors, consultants, attorneys and staff, who assist in performing professional competence review activities; or D. Joint committees of 2 or more health care entities."

- f. **Incomplete Applications.** An incomplete Application will not be processed. Any Application which remains incomplete for one hundred eighty (180) days from the date of receipt by the Medical Staff Office will be declared incomplete. If membership and clinical privileges are still desired, a new Application will be required. Rejection for this reason shall not be subject to any of the procedural rights to hearing or appellate review as set forth in Article VIII of these Bylaws.

SECTION 2. Procedure for Initial Appointment

- a. **Submission of Application.** The Application shall be submitted to the Medical Staff Office as designee of the Hospital President. The Medical Staff Office shall verify current licensure, DEA registration (if applicable), education, relevant training, and current competence in writing from the primary source wherever feasible or from a credentials verification organization (“CVO”). The Medical Staff Office shall also query the National Practitioner Data Bank, OIG/EPLS, the applicant’s professional liability carrier(s) for claims history at a minimum of the ten (10) most recent years, perform a background check, and request responses from the peer references listed in the Application. After receiving all verifying information and other information or materials deemed pertinent, the Medical Staff Office shall transmit the Application and all supporting documentation to the Credentials Committee for evaluation. The Application shall become incomplete if the need arises for new, additional or clarifying information anytime during evaluation.

- b. **Department Chief Procedure.** Upon receipt, of the complete Application the Credentials Committee shall refer the Application to the Department Chief of each Department in which the applicant seeks clinical privileges. Within ten (10) days of receipt, the Department Chief shall provide a written recommendation for appointment and specific written findings supporting the proposed delineation of the applicant’s clinical privileges. The Department Chief may delegate this function to the Service Leader, Medical Director or Lead Physician of each Service (“Service Representative”) to which the applicant requests assignment. The recommendation(s) shall be made part of the credentialing record and included in the Credentials Committee report to the Medical Executive Committee. As part of the evaluation the Department Chief, and/or Service Representative may meet with the applicant to discuss any aspect of the Application, qualifications and requested clinical privileges.

- c. **Credentials Committee Procedure.** Upon receipt of the Department Chief/Service Representative recommendation, the Credentials Committee shall proceed to evaluate the Application in the following manner:
 1. Review the Application and examine all evidence of the applicant’s character, professional competence, qualifications, prior behavior, and ethical standing to determine whether the applicant has established and satisfied all of the necessary qualifications for the clinical privileges requested. The Committee shall also evaluate the following:
 - a) challenges to the applicant’s licensure or registration,
 - b) voluntary or involuntary relinquishment of any license or registration,
 - c) voluntary or involuntary limitation, reduction or loss of clinical privileges,
 - d) any evidence of an excess number of professional liability actions resulting in a final judgment against the applicant,
 - e) documentation as to the applicant’s health status, and
 - f) relevant practitioner-specific data as compared to aggregate data, when available.
 2. On reasonable grounds, and in a manner consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act and similar state laws, require a physical, psychomotor, and/or mental health examination of the applicant by a physician or physicians satisfactory to the Committee

- and require that the results be made available for the Committee's consideration.
3. If the recommendation for appointment and/or clinical privileges is favorable, recommend Department and/or Service assignment and delineation of initial clinical privileges.
 4. At its option, require a meeting with the applicant, without legal counsel, to discuss any aspect of the Application, qualifications, or clinical privileges requested. An Active Staff member seeking to employ an Allied Health Staff applicant shall have the opportunity to appear before the Credentials Committee to discuss the proposed appointment and delineation of clinical privileges before the Committee makes its recommendation.
 5. Within sixty (60) days of receipt of the application, complete its review of the Application and supporting documentation. The Committee may defer action on the Application for up to an additional sixty (60) days to obtain further information or clarification from the applicant or others deemed reasonably necessary by the Committee in considering its recommendation.
 6. After completing its review, the Committee shall send its recommendation to the Medical Executive Committee.

d. Medical Executive Committee Procedure.

1. Within thirty (30) days of receipt of the Credentials Committee recommendation, the Medical Executive Committee shall review the recommendation as well as the Application, supporting documentation and the recommendations of the Department Chief/ Service Representative.
2. If, after reviewing the Credentials Committee's recommendation, the Medical Executive Committee's recommendation is favorable, it shall send its recommendation to the Board for consideration at its next regularly scheduled meeting and shall include the findings and recommendation of the Credentials Committee.
3. The Medical Executive Committee may defer action on the application for up to thirty (30) days to obtain additional information or clarification from the applicant, Credentials Committee, Department Chief/Service Representative, or others deemed reasonably necessary by the Medical Executive Committee in considering its recommendation.
4. If, after reviewing the Credentials Committee's recommendation, the Medical Executive Committee's recommendation is unfavorable and would entitle the applicant to a hearing pursuant to Article VIII, of these Bylaws, the Medical Executive Committee's recommendation shall be forwarded to the VPMA, who shall promptly provide Special Notice to the applicant. The VPMA shall then hold the Application until after the applicant has exercised or has been deemed to have waived the right to a hearing as provided in Bylaws, Article VIII, after which the VPMA shall forward the recommendation, together with the Application and all supporting documentation, to the Board.

e. Board Procedure.

1. The Board shall consider the Medical Executive Committee's recommendation at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board may, in whole or in part, adopt or reject a favorable recommendation of the Medical Executive Committee, or refer the

recommendation back to the Medical Executive Committee for further consideration stating the reasons for such referral and setting a time limit within which the Medical Executive Committee shall reconsider its recommendation.

2. If the Board's decision is unfavorable to the applicant in respect to either appointment or clinical privileges, the President of the Hospital shall promptly provide Special Notice to the applicant of their right to appeal the Board's adverse decision. The Board shall only take final action on the Application after the applicant has exhausted or waived their procedural rights as provided in Article VIII of these Bylaws.

f. Notice of Final Decision.

1. Notice of the Board's final decision shall be given to the Medical Executive Committee and, through the Hospital President, to the applicant by Special Notice.
2. A favorable decision shall include:
 - a) The staff category to which the applicant is appointed,
 - b) Department/Service assignment,
 - c) delineation of clinical privileges granted, and
 - d) any special conditions attached to the appointment or clinical privileges.

- g. Reapplication after Adverse Appointment Decision.** An applicant who has received a final adverse decision regarding appointment shall not be eligible to re-apply to the Medical Staff for a period of three (3) years. Any such re-application shall be processed as an initial application.

SECTION 3. Procedure for Reappointment

- a. Procedure for Reappointment.** Medical Staff reappointments shall not exceed thirty six (36) months. The Medical Staff Office, as designee of the Hospital President shall, at least ninety (90) days prior to the expiration date of each Medical Staff appointment, provide the member an Application for reappointment as provided in Section 1. Each member of the Medical Staff who desires reappointment shall, at least sixty (60) days prior to the expiration date of their appointment, submit, in accordance with Section 1, a completed Application for reappointment to the Medical Staff Office. Failure, without good cause, as determined solely at the discretion of the Medical Executive Committee, to submit a completed Application for reappointment within the time limits set forth herein may result in automatic termination of membership and clinical privileges at the expiration of the member's then current term. The affected member may reapply. However, such applications shall be treated as an application for initial appointment under Section 1.
- b. Required Documentation.** A completed application for reappointment shall include a current copy of the following documents:
1. Maine Professional License(s)/Certifications,
 2. Federal Narcotics License (DEA) (if applicable),
 3. Current Certificate of Insurance, in an amount acceptable by the Board, and
 4. Any certifications or advancements in training since initial appointment.

- c. **Verification of Information.** The Medical Staff Office, as designee of the Hospital President, shall verify the information provided in the Application for reappointment and collect any additional information deemed relevant, including information regarding the applicant's professional activities, performance and conduct in the Hospital. When collection and verification is accomplished, the Medical Staff Office shall send the information and supporting documentation to the Credentials Committee.

- d. **Credentials Committee Procedures.** The Credentials Committee shall review the Application for reappointment and supporting documentation, including the results of Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation and any Focused Professional Practice Evaluation. Following its review, the Committee shall send its recommendation to the Medical Executive Committee for consideration at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Credentials Committee may recommend that appointment be:
 - 1. renewed,
 - 2. renewed with modified staff category,
 - 3. renewed with changes in Department/Service affiliation,
 - 4. renewed with modification of clinical privileges, or
 - 5. denied.

- e. **Medical Executive Committee Procedures.** The Medical Executive Committee shall review the recommendation of the Credentials Committee, the reappointment application and all supporting documentation. Following its review, it shall send its recommendation to the Hospital President for transmittal to and consideration by the Board. The Medical Executive Committee may recommend that appointment be either renewed, renewed with modified staff category, changes in Department/Service affiliation, and/or modification of clinical privileges, or denial of reappointment or clinical privileges.

- f. **Board Procedures.** Upon receipt of the Medical Executive Committee's recommendation, the Board shall follow the procedures set forth in Sections 2.e and f.

SECTION 4. Requests for Modification of Appointment

A member of the Medical Staff may, either in connection with reappointment or at any other time, request modification of their staff category, Department/Service assignment, or clinical privileges by submitting a written request to the Credentials Committee. Such request shall be processed in substantially the same manner as an Application for reappointment under these Bylaws.

SECTION 5. Confidentiality and Reporting

Professional Competence Review Activity, including, but not limited to, actions taken, and recommendations made pursuant to this Article shall be treated as confidential in accordance with such policies regarding confidentiality as may be adopted by the Board. In addition, reports of actions taken pursuant to these Bylaws shall be made by the Hospital President to such governmental agencies

as may be required by law.

SECTION 6. Professional Review Protection

All minutes, reports, recommendations, communications and actions made or taken in carrying out Professional Competence Review Activities pursuant to applicable law or these Bylaws are deemed to be covered by the provisions of 32 M.R.S. §§ 2599, 3293 and 3296, 24 M.R.S. §§ 2501-2511, 42 U.S.C. §§ 11101-11152, and/or the corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal or state statute providing protection to professional competence review or related activities.

SECTION 7. Employed or Contracted Members

Nothing contained in these Bylaws shall be construed to discriminate with regard to Medical Staff membership and/or clinical privileges on the basis of whether a Member is an employee of the Hospital or providing services to the Hospital pursuant to a professional services agreement. Provided, nevertheless, that this Section shall not affect the terms of any contract or written employment arrangement with the Hospital that provides that a Member's membership and/or clinical privileges are incident to or coterminous with the contract or employment arrangement or the Member's association with a group holding such contract.

SECTION 8. Focused Professional Practice Evaluation

- a. **Focused Professional Practice Evaluation (FPPE).** FPPE is an extension of the Medical Staff credentialing process that entails a period of focused performance review.
- b. **FPPE Procedures.** FPPE shall be conducted by the Professional Practice Evaluation Committee for the following:
 1. newly appointed Members,
 2. currently credentialed Members requesting new or additional privileges,
 3. Members returning from a prolonged period of absence from practice, as determined by the Medical Executive Committee, or
 4. whenever questions arise regarding a Member's professional performance that may affect the provision of safe, high-quality patient care.
- c. **Evaluation Period.** The FPPE period for all newly appointed Members and currently credentialed Members requesting new or additional privileges is six (6) months. Upon the recommendation of the Credentials Committee, the Medical Executive Committee may, in its discretion, extend the evaluation period for a time not to exceed one year.
- d. **Evaluation Process.** Information used for evaluation may be obtained through, but is not limited to, the following:
 1. concurrent or targeted medical record review,

2. direct observation,
 3. monitoring/proctoring of diagnostic, procedural, and/or treatment techniques,
 4. discussion with other Members involved in the care of specific patients,
 5. interviews with the Member,
 6. sentinel event data, and/or
 7. any applicable Professional Competence Committee data.
- e. **Initially Requested Privileges.** For all newly appointed Members and all existing Members requesting new or additional privileges undergoing an initial period of FPPE, the following steps shall be taken:
1. Evaluations will be performed by an Active Staff member.
 2. A Mentor with similar privileges from the same clinical department will conduct the evaluation based on pre-determined indicators.
 3. The Mentor will complete the required forms and submit them to Professional Practice Evaluation Committee.
 4. Evaluations should be completed within six (6) months of any new appointment. Any deviation from this timeframe will require a letter from the Mentor requesting more time.
- f. **Mentoring of Specific Procedures.** Mentoring specific procedures will be determined on a case- by-case basis at the discretion of the Professional Practice Evaluation Committee. In the event a Mentor cannot be chosen from the Medical Staff due to an obvious or perceived potential conflict of interest, a Mentor may be assigned from another organization's medical staff.
- g. **Quality of Care Concerns.**
1. FPPE of a Member's performance by the Professional Practice Evaluation Committee will occur only when issues are identified that may affect the provision of safe, high-quality medical care. One or more of the following criteria will trigger the need for an FPPE:
 - a) aggregate, valid, or provider specific data that demonstrates a significant untoward variation from internal or external benchmarks or performance,
 - b) a problematic pattern or trend identified as a result of the ongoing professional practice evaluation of the Member,
 - c) a complaint or quality of care concern against the Member that is of a serious nature, or
 - d) evidence of behavior, health, and/or performance issues that carry an immediate threat to the health and safety of the patient, public, other members of the health care team or Hospital.
- h. **Recommendation to the Medical Executive Committee.** The Professional Practice Evaluation Review Committee shall report its FPPE recommendations to the Credentials Committee, the Credentials Committee will report the FPPE recommendations to Medical Executive Committee, recommending that it take one or more of the following actions:

1. Conclude the FPPE with one of the following actions:
 - a) Take no further action,
 - b) Require the Member to receive the education and/or training necessary to more competently perform the privileges in question, or
 - c) Commence corrective action pursuant to Article VII of these Bylaws.
2. Continue the FPPE period for a determined period of time in order to acquire the information necessary to make an appropriate recommendation.

SECTION 9. Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation

- a. **Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation (OPPE).** The Professional Practice Evaluation Committee shall conduct OPPE of each credentialed Member. OPPE is the continuous evaluation of a Member's professional performance, rather than an episodic evaluation. It is intended to identify and resolve potential professional practice trends and performance issues as soon as possible, as well as foster a more efficient, evidence-based privilege renewal process.

- b. **OPPE Criteria.** Data collected for ongoing professional practice evaluation is used to make decisions to maintain, revise or revoke existing privileges, or to recommend expansion of privileges, at the time of application for reviewed or expanded privileges. If, as a result of OPPE, a pattern or trend affecting quality of care and patient safety is identified, performance improvement activities may result, including an FPPE. OPPE criteria may include, but are not limited to the following:
 1. An evaluation of the six general competencies: patient care, medical knowledge, practice-based learning and improvement, interpersonal and communication skills, professionalism and system-based practice,
 2. Blood use (may include AABB transfusion criteria),
 3. Prescribing of medications: prescribing patterns, trends, errors and appropriateness of prescribing for Drug Use Evaluations,
 4. Surgical Case Review: appropriateness and outcomes for selected high-risk procedures as defined by the Medical Staff,
 5. Specific department indicators that have been defined by the Medical Staff,
 6. Anesthesia/Moderate Sedation Adverse Events,
 7. Readmissions/unplanned returns to surgery (as defined),
 8. Appropriateness of care for non-invasive procedures/interventions,
 9. Utilization data,
 10. Significant deviations from evidence-based professionally recognized standards of practice, and,
 11. Timely and legible completion of patients' medical records. Any variant that should be analyzed for statistical significance.

- c. **Reporting.** Data will be compiled and reported for each Member on a periodic basis. Individual profiles will be made available to each Member, their Department Chief, and the Credentials

Committee.

- d. **Member-Specific Profile.** A Member-specific profile shall be created and used to compile the OPPE data to be evaluated.
- e. **Use of OPPE Information.** As a result of the evaluation, the Professional Practice Evaluation Committee make any of the following recommendations:
 - 1. No action is necessary as the review demonstrates satisfactory performance by the Member.
 - 2. Education and/or training may be required in order to improve the Member's performance in the indicator(s) measured.
 - 3. FPPE may be required to better understand practice issues relative to the indicator(s) measured and/or to determine competency.
 - 4. Refer issues to the Medical Executive Committee for consideration of corrective action pursuant to Article VII of these Bylaws.
- f. **Use of OPPE Information at Reappointment.** OPPE Information shall be made available to the Credentials Committee at the time of the Member's reappointment and/or request for modification of privileges. It shall be considered in making the recommendation for reappointment and/or privileging.

ARTICLE VI

CLINICAL PRIVILEGES

SECTION 1. Exercise of Privileges

Medical Staff appointment or reappointment shall not confer any clinical privileges or right to practice in the Hospital. Each individual who has been appointed to the Medical Staff shall be entitled to exercise only those clinical privileges specifically granted by the Board.

SECTION 2. Temporary Privileges

a. **Temporary Privileges for Applicants and Members Requesting Additional or Modified Clinical Privileges.**

1. In extraordinary situations the Senior VP and Hospital President, with the recommendation of the VPMA or the VPMA, as designee of the Hospital President, may grant temporary privileges to an applicant for a period of no more than one hundred twenty (120) days, if necessary to fulfill an important patient care, treatment, or service need or when an applicant for new privileges with a completed Application that raises no concerns is awaiting review and approval by the Medical Executive Committee and the Board. An "applicant for new privileges" shall include an individual who:
 - a) Has submitted an initial application for Medical Staff membership and clinical privileges,
 - b) Currently holds clinical privileges at the Hospital and who is seeking one or more additional clinical privileges, or
 - c) Is in the reappointment process and is seeking one or more additional privileges.
2. Temporary privileges may be granted only upon receipt of a complete Application and a National Practitioner Data Bank Query of the applicant. The Application shall be verified as to current licensure, current competence, relevant training or experience, ability to perform the privileges requested, no current or previously successful challenge to licensure or registration, no subjection to involuntary termination of medical staff membership at another organization, no subjection to involuntary limitation, reduction, denial, or loss of clinical privileges, and professional liability insurance coverage and history.
3. In exercising temporary privileges, the Practitioner shall act under the supervision of the Department Chief or the Service Chief of the Service in which the applicant has requested or holds clinical privileges.

- b. **Temporary Clinical Privileges for Non-Applicants.** In order to fulfill an important patient care, treatment and service need, temporary admitting and/or clinical privileges for care of a specific patient or patients may be granted by the VPMA, as designee of the Hospital President, to a Practitioner who is not an applicant for appointment or reappointment, in the same manner and upon the same conditions as set forth in Article VI, Section 2.a of these Bylaws. Such privileges shall be restricted to the specific patients for which they are granted.

- c. **Termination of Temporary Privileges.** On the discovery of any information or the occurrence of any event of a professionally questionable nature about a Practitioner's qualifications or ability to exercise any or all of the temporary privileges granted, the Hospital President, or VPMA may, after consultation with the responsible Department Chief or Service Chief, terminate any or all of a Practitioner's temporary privileges. With respect to Practitioner's holding temporary privileges while an initial or reappointment Application is pending, such temporary privileges shall be automatically terminated at such time as the Medical Executive Committee recommends denial of the Application. In the event of any such termination, the Practitioner's patients then in the Hospital shall be assigned to another Practitioner by the Department Chief or Service Chief with the consent of the substitute Practitioner and the patient.
- d. **Procedural Rights of Temporary Privilege Applicants/Practitioners.** Practitioners or Members shall not be entitled to the procedural rights afforded in Article VIII of these Bylaws because of their inability to obtain temporary privileges or because of any termination or suspension of temporary privileges.

SECTION 3. Locum Tenens

The Hospital President or VPMA, as designee of the Hospital President, may grant an individual serving as locum tenens for a member of the Medical Staff temporary clinical privileges to attend patients of that Practitioner for a period not to exceed one hundred twenty (120) days and only after receipt of a complete Application for appointment. This grant of clinical privileges shall be considered in the same manner and upon the same conditions as set forth in Article VI, Section 2.a, c, and d.

SECTION 4. Disaster Privileges

- a. **Declaration of Disaster or Emergency.** During a period when a medical emergency or disaster has been declared; the Hospital's emergency or disaster management plan has been activated; and the Hospital is unable to handle immediate patient care needs without additional support, it may be necessary for Practitioners who are not members of the Medical Staff to be granted clinical privileges to provide care at the Hospital.
- b. **Granting Authority.** In such circumstances, the Hospital President or VPMA, may grant such privileges. In cases where neither the Hospital President nor VPMA, is available, the Medical Staff President, Department Chief or a Service Chief may grant such privileges.
- c. **Identification.** The identity of the Practitioner being granted disaster privileges must be ascertained by obtaining a copy of the individual's valid government-issued photo identification (for example, a driver's license or passport) and any one of the following:
 - 1. Current hospital picture ID,
 - 2. Current license, certification, or registration to practice,
 - 3. Identification indicating that the individual is a member of a Disaster Medical Assistance Team, the Medical Reserve Corps, the Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals, or other state or federal response organization or group,

4. Identification from a federal, state, or municipal entity indicating that the individual has been granted authority to render patient care, treatment, and services in disaster circumstances, or
 5. Representation by a current member of the Medical Staff with personal knowledge regarding the Practitioner's identity.
- d. **Supervision.** The Hospital President, VPMA, the President of the Medical Staff or Department or Service Chief shall pair a currently credentialed Medical Staff member (in the same specialty or as close to that specialty as can be matched under the circumstances) with the Practitioner being granted disaster privileges who will act only under the direct supervision of the credentialed Medical Staff member.
- e. **Verification Process.** Verification of the credentials of Practitioners granted disaster privileges must be carried out as soon as the disaster is under control or within seventy-two (72) hours of the Practitioner's commencement of providing disaster medical services, whichever occurs first. If primary source verification cannot be completed within seventy-two (72) hours due to extraordinary circumstances, it shall be completed as soon as possible. In such extraordinary circumstances the Hospital shall document the following:
1. The reason(s) why verification could not be performed within seventy-two (72) hours,
 2. Evidence of the Practitioner's demonstrated ability to continue providing adequate care, treatment, and services, and
 3. Evidence of the Hospital's attempt to perform primary source verification as soon as possible.
- f. **ID Badges.** Practitioners granted disaster privileges must wear Hospital-issued identification at all times showing their disaster privileges.
- g. **Termination.** Disaster privileges will automatically terminate when the disaster is declared over, the immediate situation is under control, and members of the Medical Staff are able to resume patient care duties without disaster assistance. Practitioners are not entitled to the procedural rights afforded by the Hearing and Appellate Review Procedures in Article VIII of these Bylaws because of their inability to obtain disaster privileges or because of any termination or suspension of disaster privileges.

SECTION 5. Emergency Privileges

In case of an emergency in which serious permanent harm or aggravation of injury or disease is imminent, or in which the life of a patient is in immediate danger, and any delay in administering treatment could add to the danger, any Member, to the degree permitted by their license/certification and regardless of Service, staff status or clinical privileges, is authorized to do everything possible to save the patient's life or to save the patient from serious or permanent harm. Emergency privileges exercised under this provision shall be for a maximum of seventy-two (72) hours and are not renewable. After termination of such privileges, the patient shall be assigned to an appropriate member of the Medical Staff. Emergency privileges may be granted to a Practitioner not holding clinical privileges at the

Hospital, provided that the identification, credentials verification and supervision requirements governing the grant of disaster privileges, as set forth in Article VI, Section 4 c, d, and e of these Bylaws are applied to such Practitioners.

SECTION 6. Telemedicine Privileges

- a. **Verification Process.** Licensed independent Practitioners, or their employers, who provide medical information exchanged from distant sites to the Hospital, via electronic communications, for the health and education of the patient or health care provider and for the purpose of improving patient care, treatment and services shall have an agreement with the Hospital pursuant to which they act as a contractor of services to the Hospital and that describes the services to be provided in a manner that permits the Hospital to be in compliance with the Medicare Conditions of Participation. Distant site Practitioners shall be credentialed and privileged in either of the following mechanisms:
 1. Verification of credentials and competence to render telemedicine services by the methods outlined in these Bylaws, or
 2. Delegated credentialing verification using credentialing information from the distant site if the distant site is accredited by a recognized accreditation body like The Joint Commission, and the hospital or ambulatory care organization maintains the credentialing decisions of the Hospital's Medical Staff and Board. The remote Practitioner must be privileged at the distant site for those services to be provided to the Hospital.
- b. **Voting and Supervision.** Telemedicine Practitioners shall not be eligible to vote or to hold Medical Staff office. Any licensed independent Practitioner granted Telemedicine privileges shall be under the medical and administrative supervision of the Medical Staff. Telemedicine privileges shall be subject to the provisional appointment provisions of these Bylaws.
- c. **Performance Review.** The Medical Staff shall review the performance of Practitionersexercising telemedicine privileges and shall provide the distant site with information that is useful in assessing the Practitioner's quality of care, treatment, and services for use in privileging and performance improvement. At a minimum, such information shall include:
 1. Information regarding adverse outcomes related to sentinel events considered reviewable by the Hospital's accreditation body that result from telemedicine services provided, and
 2. Complaints about the distant site Practitioner from patients, licensed independent Practitioners, or staff at the Hospital.
- d. **Termination.** Upon termination of a telemedicine service agreement pursuant to which a Practitioner is providing services, or if the Practitioner's employment with the distant site is terminated, the Practitioner's telemedicine privileges shall terminate. Such termination shall not be subject to the fair hearing and appeal provisions set forth in Article VIII of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE VII

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION AND CORRECTIVE ACTION

SECTION 1. Complaint Resolution

- a. **Complaint Resolution Process.** An optional Complaint Resolution Process (“CRP”) may be used to address documented allegations or concerns regarding a Member’s clinical performance, conduct or health that, upon initial identification, appear not to meet the criteria for corrective action. CRP provides an opportunity for preliminary review of certain complaints and may assist the Medical Executive Committee in determining whether further review or corrective action is warranted.
- b. **Initiating a CRP.** Any complaint regarding a Member’s competency, conduct, or health, may be submitted in writing to the Member’s Department Chief, Medical Director, or designee. Only written and signed complaints shall be acted upon. The complainant shall be informed that their identity may be revealed to the affected Member during the CRP. The affected Member should understand that any retaliation against the complainant may be grounds for additional CRP or corrective action in accordance with the Bylaws.
- c. **Department Chief Review and Recommendation.** The Department Chief shall review the complaint and make a preliminary recommendation whether the complaint should be managed through a CRP.
- d. **CRP Meeting.** If the Department Chief determines that a CRP should be initiated, the Chief shall forward the complaint to the President of the Medical Staff, VPMA, or designee who shall provide a copy of the complaint to the affected Member and schedule a complaint resolution meeting with the affected Member, the Department Chief and any other persons that may be necessary or helpful in resolving the complaint. The goal of the meeting is to reach a resolution of the complaint.
- e. **Notice of CRP Meeting.** The affected Member shall be given notice of the meeting at least five (5) working days prior to the meeting, or such shorter notice as may be mutually agreed upon by the affected Member and Department Chief.
- f. **Option to Participate in CRP.** Affected Members shall be advised that they have the option not to participate in the CRP and to have the matter resolved through the corrective action process set forth in the Bylaws.
- g. **Complaint Resolution Process Report.** After the CRP meeting, the Department Chief or VMPA shall record the results including any recommendations and forward a report to the Medical Executive Committee using the Complaint Resolution Process Report form, attached hereto as Attachment A and made a part of these Bylaws. The affected Member shall be informed of the results and recommendations of the Department Chief and may rebut or comment on them in writing to the Medical Executive Committee.

- h. **Medical Executive Committee Review and Decision.** The Complaint Resolution Report shall be reviewed by the Medical Executive Committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Committee shall approve or reject the Complaint Resolution Report. If approved, the disposition and documentation of the complaint shall be considered satisfactory and final. If rejected, the Medical Executive Committee shall notify the affected Member of its rationale for rejecting the Report and its alternative recommendations or actions.
- i. **CRP Does Not Limit Medical Executive Committee Action.** The CRP findings and recommendations shall not limit the Medical Executive Committee from recommending or taking further action regarding the allegations/concerns.

SECTION 2. Corrective Action

- a. **Criteria for Initiation of Corrective Action.** Corrective Action may be requested by the VPMA, Medical Staff President, a Department Chief or Board Chair whenever, on the basis of reasonable information and belief, the activities or professional conduct of any Member are considered to:
 - 1. Be detrimental to patient safety or likely to affect adversely the delivery of quality patient care in the Hospital,
 - 2. Violate bylaws, policies, rules or standards adopted by the Medical Staff, the Hospital or the Board,
 - 3. Be disruptive to the operations of the Hospital or materially impede the orderly and efficient administration of the Hospital's affairs, including the inability or failure of the Member to work collegially with others, as more specifically defined in the Medical Staff's Code of Conduct and Statement of Values and the Hospital's Disruptive Medical Staff Member Policy, or
 - 4. Fail to meet and satisfy the qualifications for staff status or to fulfill the responsibilities of staff status provided in these Bylaws.
- b. **Request and Notice.** All requests for corrective action shall be in writing, submitted to the Medical Executive Committee, and supported by reference to the specific activities or conduct which constitute the grounds for the request. The President of the Medical Staff shall notify the VPMA, in writing, of all requests for corrective action and shall keep the VPMA fully informed of all actions taken in conjunction therewith.
- c. **Medical Executive Committee Preliminary Review.** The Medical Executive Committee shall conduct a preliminary review of a request for corrective action at its next regularly scheduled meeting or at an earlier meeting called for that purpose. The Medical Executive Committee shall either reject the request for corrective action, if it determines that the request lacks a factual basis, or direct that an investigation concerning the grounds for the request be undertaken.

- d. **Notice.** Within two (2) business days following the Medical Executive Committee's preliminary review, the President of the Medical Staff shall notify the affected Member of the Medical Executive Committee's preliminary decision by Special Notice.
- e. **Investigation.** If the Medical Executive Committee determines to conduct an investigation it may conduct the investigation or may appoint an Investigating Committee to conduct the investigation.
- f. **Conduct of the Investigation.** In order to evaluate the request for corrective action the investigation shall include the following:
 - 1. Review of all documentation relevant to the request,
 - 2. Interviews with the person(s) making the request,
 - 3. Interviews with persons who may have knowledge bearing on the request, and
 - 4. Pursuant to Section 2.h, a meeting with the affected Member.
- g. **Investigating Committee.** If the Medical Executive Committee elects to impanel an Investigating Committee, the President of the Medical Staff or their designee shall assign three (3) Members from the affected Member's Department to serve as committee members. If assigning three (3) Members from the same Department is not possible, the President of the Medical Staff shall assign Members from another Department as necessary in order to impanel a three (3) person committee.
- h. **Meeting with Member.** The investigation shall include a meeting with the affected Member. The Member will be given Special Notice of the meeting at least five (5) business days before such meeting unless the Member agrees to shorter notice. Notice shall include the date, time, and place of the meeting, a statement of the issue(s) involved, and a statement that the Member's appearance is requested. The meeting shall not constitute a hearing, shall be preliminary in nature, and need not be conducted according to the procedural rules provided with respect to hearings as set forth in Article VIII of these Bylaws, but shall afford the Member a fair opportunity to respond to questions and to address the allegations set forth in the request for corrective action. The interview shall constitute a peer-to-peer interaction and neither the affected Member nor the Investigating Committee shall be represented by counsel during the interview.
- i. **Report of the Investigating Committee.** If an Investigating Committee is appointed, it shall send a written report of its investigation to the Medical Executive Committee as soon as practical after its investigation has been completed, but in no event later than sixty (60) days after referral by the Medical Executive Committee.
- j. **Resources Available.** The Medical Executive Committee or the Investigating Committee, in conducting its investigation, shall have available the full resources of the Medical Staff and the Hospital, and the authority to use outside consultants as deemed necessary, if approved by the Medical Executive Committee and the Hospital President.

- k. **Impartial Physical and/or Mental Evaluation.** If relevant to the issues raised in the request for corrective action, the Medical Executive Committee may require the affected Member to submit to an impartial physical and/or mental health evaluation. The Medical Executive Committee may require the Member to submit to such evaluation within thirty (30) days of its request subject to the following conditions:
1. Failure of the Member to submit to an impartial physical or mental evaluation without good cause shall result in immediate suspension of the Member's staff status and all clinical privileges until the evaluation is obtained and the results are reported to the Medical Executive Committee.
 2. The impartial evaluator who will conduct the examination shall be selected by the Medical Executive Committee. However, the Medical Executive Committee shall consider input from the affected Member regarding its choice of the evaluator.
 3. Fees for an evaluation under this Section shall be paid by the Hospital.
 4. The evaluator's report shall be submitted to the President of the Medical Staff, who shall share the results with the Medical Executive Committee at its next meeting following receipt of the report.
- l. **Medical Executive Committee Action.** The Medical Executive Committee shall act as soon as practical after the conclusion of the investigative process, but in no event later than ninety (90) days after receipt of the request for corrective action. Medical Executive Committee action may include, but is not limited to, the following:
1. Reconvening the Investigating Committee to address specific issues,
 2. Rejecting the request for corrective action,
 3. Modifying the request for corrective action,
 4. Issuing, a letter of reprimand,
 5. Recommending additional education and/or training,
 6. Recommending individual medical/psychiatric treatment or counseling,
 7. Recommending a retrospective review of cases and/or other review of professional behavior, but without special requirements of prior or concurrent or direct supervision,
 8. Imposing terms of probation or a requirement for proctoring or consultation,
 9. Recommending to the Board reduction, suspension, or revocation of any part or all of the clinical privileges granted, and/or
 10. Recommending reduction, suspension, or revocation of staff membership.

SECTION 3. Summary Suspension

- a. **Criteria and Initiation.** The President of the Hospital, the VPMA, the President of the Medical Staff or the Board Chair shall have the authority to summarily suspend all or a portion of the clinical privileges of any Member whenever they perceive that there is a substantial likelihood that failure to do so may result in: (1) injury or damage to the health or safety of any patient, employee or other person present in the Hospital or (2) disruption of the orderly operations of the Hospital. A summary suspension is precautionary in nature and shall not imply a final finding of responsibility for the matters giving rise to the suspension. Summary suspension shall

become effective immediately upon imposition. The President of the Hospital or designee shall promptly notify the affected Member by the most expeditious manner, including, but not limited to, in person, telephone call, or email, and shall also provide Special Notice of the summary suspension to the Member.

- b. **Medical Executive Committee Action.** As soon as practical, but not more than ten (10) days after such summary suspension, a meeting of the Medical Executive Committee shall be convened to review and consider the action taken. The Medical Executive Committee may recommend modification, continuation or termination of the terms of the summary suspension.
- c. **Procedural Rights.** Unless the Medical Executive Committee recommends immediate termination of the suspension and cessation of all further corrective action, the Member shall be entitled to the expedited procedural rights to a hearing as provided in Article VIII of these Bylaws. The terms of the summary suspension as sustained or as modified by the Medical Executive Committee shall remain in effect pending a final decision by the Board.

SECTION 4. Automatic Suspension

- a. **License.** Action by the appropriate state licensing board or agency revoking or suspending Member's professional license, or loss or lapse of state license to practice for any reason, shall result in automatic suspension of all Hospital clinical privileges as of that date, until the matter is resolved, and the license restored. In the event the Member's license is only partially restricted, the clinical privileges that would be affected by the license restriction shall be similarly restricted.
- b. **Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA").** Members who are required to have DEA number whose DEA number is revoked or suspended shall have their right to prescribe medications covered by such number immediately and automatically suspended as of that date. As soon as possible after such automatic suspension, the Medical Executive Committee shall convene to review and consider the facts under which the DEA number was revoked or suspended. The Medical Executive Committee may then take such further action as is appropriate to the facts disclosed in its investigation.
- c. **Failure to be Adequately Insured.** If at any time a Member's professional liability insurance coverage lapses, falls below the required minimum, is terminated, or otherwise ceases to be in effect (in whole or in part), the Member's clinical privileges that would be affected shall be automatically suspended as of that date until the matter is resolved and adequate professional liability insurance coverage is restored.
- d. **Failure to Complete Medical Records.** A pattern of failure to complete medical records in a timely fashion as defined in the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of the Medical Staff shall result in automatic suspension of the Member's privileges to perform non-emergent procedures and admit new patients which shall be effective until all delinquent medical records are completed. As an alternative to automatic suspension the affected Member may be subject to the complaint resolution process or corrective action as provided in Article VII of these Bylaws. For

the purpose of enforcing this Section 4.d, justified reasons for delay in completing medical records shall include, without limitation, the following mitigating circumstances:

1. The Member or any other individual contributing to the record is ill, on vacation, out of town, or otherwise unavailable for a period of time, or
 2. The Member is awaiting the results of a late report which is necessary for completion of a discharge summary and establishment of a final diagnosis.
- e. Failure to Pay Medical Staff Dues. Failure to pay Medical Staff dues when due shall result in automatic suspension of all clinical privileges and Medical Staff membership which shall continue until all dues are paid in full.
- f. Failure to Obtain Required Immunizations. Failure to obtain all immunizations required by Hospital policy shall result in automatic suspension of all clinical privileges and Medical Staff membership which shall remain in effect until all required immunizations have been obtained.
- g. Failure to Complete Annual Mandated Online Education. Failure to complete, in a timely manner, mandated education as required by Hospital policy shall result in automatic suspension of all clinical privileges and Medical Staff membership which shall remain in effect until all mandated education is completed.
- h. **Procedural Rights.** A Member under automatic suspension by operation of Section 4.a, 4, c. 4.e 4.f, or 4.g shall not be entitled to the procedural rights provided in Article VIII of these Bylaws. A Practitioner who has had their appointment and/or clinical privileges automatically suspended for failure to maintain current professional liability insurance, failure to maintain current Maine Medical License, failure to pay Medical Staff dues; failure to comply with the Hospital's Immunization policies, or failure to complete Annual Employer Mandated Online Education required by Hospital policy request reinstatement of appointment and/or appropriate privileges. The Practitioner shall submit the request to the Medical Staff office with the relevant required documentation i.e., proof of current professional liability insurance, current Maine Medical License in good standing, proof of payment of dues, proof of compliance with Hospital's Immunization policy, or proof of completion of Annual Employer Mandated Online Education required by Hospital policy. If the documentation is received within 90 days of automatic suspension of privileges, The Practitioner will be reinstated upon satisfactory review of supporting documentation by the MS Office. Requests received after 90 days will be processed as a new application.

ARTICLE VIII

HEARING AND APPELLATE REVIEW PROCEDURE

SECTION 1. Hearings

- a. **Hearing Right following an Adverse Recommendation.** Whenever a Member receives notice of an Adverse Recommendation, as defined in Section 2, they shall be entitled to a hearing before an ad hoc Hearing Committee of the Medical Staff established in accordance with Section 5.A. The affected Member shall have thirty (30) days following the date of the receipt of the notice of an Adverse Recommendation to request a hearing. The request for hearing shall be made in writing and shall be submitted to the President of the Hospital. In the event the affected Practitioner does not request a hearing within the time and in the manner as set forth above, they shall be deemed to have waived the right to the hearing and to have accepted the Adverse Recommendation. The Adverse Recommendation shall then be sent to the Board, and it shall become effective upon final approval by the Board. If the Adverse Recommendation following such hearing is still adverse to the Member, they shall then be entitled, upon request, to an appellate review by the Board before a final decision is rendered.
- b. **Adverse Board Decision.** When the Board is considering taking Adverse Action that is either contrary to a favorable recommendation of the Medical Executive Committee under circumstances where no prior right to a hearing existed, or being made on the Board's own initiative without benefit of a prior recommendation by the Medical Executive Committee, the affected Member shall be entitled, upon request, to a hearing by an ad hoc Board Hearing committee appointed by the Board, in accordance with Section 5.b, before the Board takes final action or renders a final decision.
- c. **Exceptions.** Actions or recommendations of the Medical Executive Committee or the Board that are not Adverse Actions, as defined in Section 2, shall not entitle the affected Member to a hearing or appellate review. Examples of actions or recommendations that do not trigger rights to a hearing or appellate review include, but are not limited to, the issuance of a warning, a letter of admonition, and a letter of reprimand.

SECTION 2. Adverse Actions or Recommendations

For purposes of these Bylaws the following recommendations or actions are deemed Adverse Actions:

- a. Denial of initial Medical Staff appointment,
- b. Denial of reappointment to the Medical Staff,
- c. Suspension of Medical Staff membership,
- d. Revocation of Medical Staff membership,

- e. Denial of requested advancement in Medical Staff category,
- f. Involuntary reduction in Medical Staff category,
- g. Denial of requested clinical privileges,
- h. Involuntary reduction of clinical privileges,
- i. Suspension of clinical privileges, other than automatic suspensions pursuant to Article VII, Section 4,
- j. Revocation of clinical privileges,
- k. Proctoring that requires either or both the prior approval of the proctor or the presence of the proctor during the exercise of clinical privileges, and/or
- l. Terms of probation.

SECTION 3. Initiation of Hearing

- a. **Notice of Adverse Action.** The President of the Hospital or VPMA as designee shall be responsible for giving Special Notice of an Adverse Action and the right to a hearing to the affected Member. The notice shall include:
 - 1. The nature of the proposed action and a statement of the Member's alleged acts or omissions, a list by number of the specific or representative patient records or subject matter forming the basis for the adverse recommendations or actions.
 - 2. Notice that the Member has thirty (30) days after receiving notice to submit a request for a hearing and that such request must satisfy the conditions for such a request.
 - 3. Notice that failure to request a hearing within the prescribed time and/or in the proper manner constitutes a waiver of rights to a hearing and to appellate review.
- b. **Waiver by Failure to Request a Hearing.**
 - 1. The failure of a Member to request a hearing to which they are entitled by these Bylaws within the time and in the manner herein provided shall be deemed a waiver of their right to such hearing and to any appellate review to which they might otherwise have been entitled on the matter.
 - 2. When the waived hearing or appellate review relates to an adverse recommendation of the Medical Executive Committee or of a hearing committee appointed by the Board, the waiver shall become and remain effective against the Member in the same manner as a final decision of the Board provided for in Article VIII of these Bylaws. In either event, the President of the Hospital or VPMA as designee shall notify the affected Member of their status by Special Notice.

SECTION 4. Hearing Prerequisites

- a. **Notice of Hearing.** Within ten (10) days after receipt of a request for a hearing the Medical Executive Committee or the Board, whichever is applicable, shall schedule and arrange for the hearing and shall, through the President of the Hospital or VPMA as designee, notify the Member of the time, place and date of the hearing by Special Notice. The hearing date shall not be less than ten (10) days nor more than sixty (60) days from the receipt of the request for hearing; provided, however, that a hearing for a Member who is under suspension which is then in effect shall be held as soon as arrangements therefore may reasonably be made, after receipt of the request for hearing.
- b. **Statement of Charges.** The notice of hearing shall state in concise language the acts or omissions with which the Member is charged, a list of specific or representative charts being questioned, if relevant, and/or other reasons or subject matter that was considered in making the adverse recommendations or decision.

SECTION 5. Composition of Hearing Committee

- a. **Medical Executive Committee.** When the hearing relates to an Adverse Action of the Medical Executive Committee the hearing shall be conducted by an ad hoc Hearing Committee of not less than three (3) Members appointed by the President of the Medical Staff in consultation with the Medical Executive Committee. One of the Members so appointed shall be designated as Chair by the President of the Medical Staff. No Member who has actively participated in the consideration of the Adverse Action shall be appointed as a member of the Hearing Committee unless it is otherwise impossible to select a representative group. In no case shall any individual who is in direct economic competition with the affected Member serve on the Hearing Committee. Practitioners who are not Members but are members of the medical staff of another Maine hospital may be appointed to serve on the Hearing Committee, if it is not possible to appoint a sufficient number from the Medical Staff.
- b. **By the Board.** When a hearing is related to an Adverse Action of the Board that is contrary to the recommendation of the Medical Executive Committee, the Board shall appoint an ad hoc Board Hearing Committee to conduct such hearing and shall designate one of the members of the committee as Chair. The committee shall be made up of at least three (3) voting members, two of whom shall be Board members. At least one representative from the Medical Staff shall be included on this committee, if feasible. In no case shall a Member who is in direct economic competition with the affected Member or who participated in the Adverse Action recommendation serve as a member of the ad hoc Board Hearing Committee. Practitioners who are not Members may be appointed, if necessary, to assure that no Member who is in direct competition with the affected Member or who participated in the adverse recommendation serves on the committee.

SECTION 6. Hearing Procedure

- a. **Committee Presence.** All members of the ad hoc Hearing Committee or the ad hoc Board Hearing Committee must be present when the hearing takes place, and no member may vote by proxy.
- b. **Records.** An accurate record of the hearing must be kept. The mechanism for recording the hearing shall be established by the ad hoc Hearing Committee or ad hoc Board Hearing Committee and may be accomplished by use of a court reporter, electronic recording unit, or by detailed transcription.
- c. **Personal Presence.** The personal presence of the affected Member shall be required. A Member who fails without good cause to appear and proceed at such hearing shall be deemed to have waived their rights in the same manner as provided in Section 3.b.1 and to have accepted the Adverse Action recommendation or decision involved, and the same shall thereupon become and remain in effect as provided in Section 3.b.2.
- d. **Postponement.** Postponement of hearings beyond the time set forth in these Bylaws shall be made only with the approval of the ad hoc Hearing Committee or ad hoc Board Hearing Committee. Granting such postponements shall only be for good cause shown and in the sole discretion of the hearing committee.
- e. **Presiding Officer.** The Chair of the hearing committee shall preside over the hearing. In the alternative a hearing officer may be appointed by the hearing committee after consultation with the President of the Medical Staff or Board Chair, as applicable. The hearing officer may or may not be an attorney at law but must be a person familiar with medical staff organization, governance and corrective action with documented experience participating as an advocate in medical staff corrective action hearings or serving as a hearing officer in such hearings. The hearing officer shall act in an impartial manner. If requested by the hearing committee, the hearing officer may participate in its deliberations, but shall not be entitled to vote. The presiding officer or hearing officer, as applicable, shall preside over the hearing, determine the order of procedure, assure that all participants in the hearing have a reasonable opportunity to present relevant oral and documentary evidence and maintain decorum.
- f. **Representation.** The affected Member shall be entitled to be represented by an attorney or other person of the Member's choice. Likewise, the Board or Medical Executive Committee may in its discretion, seek counsel and representation by an attorney.
- g. **Rights of Parties.** During the hearing, the parties shall have the right to:
 - 1. Call, examine and cross-examine witnesses,
 - 2. Introduce and present evidence determined to be relevant by the presiding officer or hearing officer without regard to its admissibility in a court of law,
 - 3. Question any witness on any matter relevant to the issue of the hearing (If an affected Member does not testify in their own behalf, they may be called and examined as if under cross examination),
 - 4. Challenge any witness,

5. Rebut any evidence, and
6. Submit a written statement at the close of the hearing within a time period prescribed by the presiding officer or hearing officer.

h. Procedure and Evidence.

1. The hearing need not be conducted strictly according to rules of law relating to the examination of witnesses or presentation of evidence. Any relevant matter upon which responsible persons customarily rely in the conduct of serious affairs shall be considered, regardless of the existence of any common law or statutory rule which might make evidence inadmissible over objection in civil or criminal action.
2. The Medical Executive Committee, when its action has prompted the hearing, shall appoint one of its members, another Member, or legal counsel to represent it at the hearing to present the facts in support of its adverse recommendation and to examine witnesses. The Board, when its action has prompted the hearing, shall appoint one of its members or legal counsel to represent it at the hearing to present the facts in support of its adverse decision and to examine witnesses. It shall be the obligation of such representative to present appropriate evidence in support of the Adverse Action recommendation or proposed decision. The affected Member shall thereafter be responsible for supporting their challenge to the Adverse Action recommendation or proposed decision, by an appropriate showing that the Adverse Action recommendation or proposed decision lacks sufficient factual basis or is arbitrary, unreasonable or capricious.

- i. **Recesses and Adjournment.** The ad hoc Hearing Committee or ad hoc Board Hearing Committee may recess and reconvene the hearing for the convenience of the participants or for the purpose of obtaining new or additional evidence or consultation. Upon the conclusion of the presentation of oral and written evidence, and upon expiration the time period within which the parties were allowed to submit written statements in accordance with Section 6.g.6, the hearing record shall close, and the hearing shall adjourn. The ad hoc Hearing Committee or ad hoc Board Hearing Committee shall, within ten (10) days after adjournment of the hearing, conduct its deliberations outside the presence of the parties.

- j. **Number of Reviews.** Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Bylaws, no Member shall be entitled as a matter of right to more than one hearing before either an ad hoc Hearing Committee or an ad hoc Board Hearing Committee and to one appellate review with respect to review of an Adverse Action recommendation.

SECTION 7. Hearing Committee Report and Further Action

- a. **Hearing Committee Report.** Within ten (10) days after adjournment of the hearing, the ad hoc Hearing Committee or ad hoc Board Hearing Committee shall make a written report and recommendation and shall forward the same together with the hearing record and all other documentation considered by it, to the Medical Executive Committee or to the Board, whichever appointed it. The report may recommend affirmation, modification, or rejection of

the original Adverse Action recommendation of the Medical Executive Committee or the proposed Adverse Action decision of the Board.

- b. **Action on Hearing Committee Report.** Within thirty (30) days after receipt of the report of the ad hoc Hearing Committee or ad hoc Board Hearing Committee, the Medical Executive Committee or the Board, as the case may be, shall consider the same and affirm, modify, or reverse its prior recommendation or action in the matter. The Medical Executive Committee or Board shall forward its recommendation, together with the hearing record, the ad hoc committee report, including copies of any documentary evidence included in the hearing record, to the President of the Hospital.
- c. **Notice.** The President of the Hospital shall promptly send a copy of the report and recommendation to the affected Member by Special Notice with copies to the Board Chair.
- d. **Effect of Decision Favorable to the Member.**
 - 1. Adopted by the Board. If the Board affirms an ad hoc Board Hearing Committee report favorable to the Member, the recommendation becomes a final decision of the Board and is not subject to further consideration.
 - 2. Adopted by the Medical Executive Committee. The Board may adopt or reject the Medical Executive Committee's recommendation, made pursuant to Section 7.b, in whole or in part or may refer the matter back to the Medical Executive Committee for further consideration. The referral shall be in writing and shall state the reasons therefore, set a time limit within which a subsequent recommendation to the Board must be made, and may require that: (i) an additional hearing by the ad hoc Hearing Committee be conducted to consider additional evidence or clarify issues that are in doubt, or (ii) the Medical Executive Committee carry out other proceedings or take other actions that the Board may require. The Medical Executive Committee shall then forward its reconsidered recommendation to the President of the Hospital and Board Chair. The President of the Hospital shall promptly send an affected Member Special Notice, informing the Member of the Medical Executive Committee's reconsidered recommendation. If, after review of the Medical Executive Committee's recommendation or reconsidered recommendation, the Board's decision is favorable to the affected Member, its decision shall be final, and not subject to further consideration. If the Board's decision is adverse to the affected Member, the President of the Hospital shall inform the affected Member by Special Notice of their right to request appellate review as provided in Sections 8 and 9.

SECTION 8. Initiation and Prerequisites of Appellate Review

- a. **Request for Appellate Review.** A Member shall have fifteen (15) days following receipt of an Adverse Action recommendation under Sections 7.b or 7.d.2 to file a written request for appellate review. Such request shall be delivered to the President of the Hospital either in person or by Special Notice and may include a request for a copy of the report and record of the ad hoc hearing committee and all other material, favorable or unfavorable, that was considered in making the Adverse Action recommendation. The request for appellate review may include a

request to file a written memorandum in support of the appeal and/or to present oral argument to the Board during the appellate review.

- b. **Waiver by Failure to Request Appellate Review.** A Member who fails to request appellate review within the time and in the manner specified in Section 8.a waives any right to such review. Such waiver shall have the same force and effect as that provided in Section 3.b.
- c. **Notice of Time and Place for Appellate Review.** Upon receipt of a timely request for appellate review, the President of the Hospital shall deliver such request to the Board. Within fifteen (15) days after receipt for such request, the Board shall schedule and arrange for such review, including a time and place for oral argument, if such has been requested, which shall not be less than twenty-five (25) days nor more than sixty (60) days from the date of receipt of the appellate review request; provided, however, that an appellate review for a Member who is under suspension then in effect shall be held as soon as the arrangements for it may reasonably be made. At least five (5) days prior to the appellate review, the Hospital President shall notify the Member by Special Notice of the time, place and date of the review. The time for appellate review may be extended by the Board for good cause.
- d. **Appellate Review Panel.** The appellate review shall be conducted by the Board or at the Board's discretion by an Appellate Review Panel composed of at least three (3) Board members, appointed by the Board Chair. If a Panel is appointed, one of its members shall be designated as Chair.

SECTION 9. Appellate Review Procedure

- a. **Nature of Proceedings.** The appellate review shall be based upon the record of the hearing before the ad hoc Hearing Committee or ad hoc Board Hearing Committee, as the case may be, the committee's report and recommendation, and all subsequent recommendations or actions by the Medical Executive Committee or Board thereon. The Board or Appellate Review Panel shall also consider any written statements submitted pursuant to Section 9.b, oral argument allowed under Section 9.d, and/or such other materials as may be presented and accepted under Section 9.e.
- b. **Written Statements.** A Member seeking review shall submit a written statement detailing the findings of fact, conclusions and procedural matters with which they disagree, and their reasons for such disagreement. This written statement may cover any matters raised at any step in the hearing process, and legal counsel may assist in its preparation. The statement shall be submitted to the Board or Appellate Review Panel through the President of the Hospital at least fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled date of the appellate review. A written statement in reply may be submitted by the Medical Executive Committee or by the Board, and if submitted, the President of the Hospital shall provide a copy thereof to the Member at least seven (7) days prior to the scheduled date of the appellate review.

- c. **Presiding Officer.** The Chair of the appellate review body shall be the presiding officer. The Chair shall determine the order of the procedure during the review, make all required rulings, and maintain decorum.
- d. **Oral Argument.** The Board or Appellate Review Panel, in its sole discretion, may allow the parties or their representatives to personally appear and make oral argument in favor of their respective positions. Any party or representative so appearing shall be required to answer questions put to them by any member of the Board or Appellate Review Panel.
- e. **Consideration of New or Additional Matters.** New or additional matters or evidence not raised or presented during the original hearing or in the hearing report and not otherwise reflected in the record may be introduced at the appellate review only under unusual circumstances. The Board or Appellate Review Panel, in its sole discretion, shall determine whether such matters or evidence shall be considered or accepted.
- f. **Recesses and Adjournment.** The Board or Appellate Review Panel may recess the appellate review and reconvene without additional notice for the convenience of the participants or for the purpose of obtaining new or additional evidence or consultation. Upon the conclusion of oral argument, if allowed, the appellate review shall be closed. The Board or Appellate Review Panel thereupon, at a time convenient to itself, shall conduct its deliberations outside the presence of the parties. Upon the conclusion of those deliberations, the appellate review shall be declared finally adjourned.
- g. **Action Taken.**
 - 1. If the appellate review is conducted by the Board, it may affirm, modify, or reverse its prior decision or, in its discretion, refer the matter back to the Medical Executive Committee for further review and recommendation within fifteen (15) days. Such referral may include a request that the Medical Executive Committee arrange for a further hearing to resolve specified disputed issues.
 - 2. If the appellate review is conducted by an Appellate Review Panel, the Panel shall, within seven (7) days after adjournment of the appellate review, either make a written report to the Board recommending that the Board affirm, modify, or reverse its prior decision, or refer the matter back to the Medical Executive Committee for further review and recommendation within fifteen (15) days. Such referral may include a request that the Medical Executive Committee reconsider its recommendation or consider taking such further action as the Appellate Review Panel requests. Within ten (10) days after the Appellate Review Panel's receipt of the Medical Executive Committee's reconsidered recommendation the Panel shall make its recommendation to the Board as provided above.

SECTION 10. Final Decision by Board

- a. **Final Decision.** Within thirty (30) days after the conclusion of the appellate review, the Board shall make its final decision in the matter and shall forward it to the Medical Executive Committee and, through the President of the Hospital, to the affected Member by Special

Notice. If the decision is in accordance with the Medical Executive Committee's last recommendation in the matter, the decision shall be immediately effective and final and shall not be subject to further hearing or appellate review. If the decision is contrary to the Medical Executive Committee's last recommendation, before the decision is made final, the Board shall refer the matter to the Joint Conference Committee for further review and recommendation.

- b. **Joint Conference Committee Review.** Within fifteen (15) days of its receipt of a matter referred to it by the Board pursuant to Section 10.a, the Joint Conference Committee shall convene to consider the matter and shall submit its recommendation to the Board. At its next meeting following the receipt of the Joint Conference Committee's recommendation, the Board shall make its final decision which shall be immediately effective and final and subject to no further hearing or appellate review. The President of the Hospital shall send Special Notice of this final decision to the affected Member.

SECTION 11. Time Frames

All reasonable steps will be taken to adhere to the time frames set forth in this Article. However, the times may be deviated from for good cause as determined by the Medical Executive Committee or the Board in the exercise of sound discretion. The Medical Executive Committee or Board may delegate the authority to deviate from these time frames in appropriate circumstances to the President of the Hospital, the President of the Medical Staff, an ad hoc hearing committees or others who have responsibilities under these Bylaws. The affected Member may request a deviation and such a request may be granted for good cause.

ARTICLE IX

OFFICERS

SECTION 1. Officers of the Medical Staff

The Officers of the Medical Staff shall be:

1. President
2. Vice-President
3. Secretary/Treasurer

SECTION 2. Qualifications of Officers

Officers must be Members of the Active or Active Outpatient Staff at the time of nomination and election and must remain Members in good standing during the term of office.

SECTION 3. Election of Officers

- a. Officers shall be elected through a ballot process. Ballots shall be mailed or sent to Members of the Active Medical Staff, Active Outpatient Staff and Allied Health Staff via an electronic system using e-mail addresses provided by each voting Member. Results will be announced at the annual meeting of the Medical Staff.
- b. The President of the Medical Staff shall appoint a Nominating Committee. The Committee shall consist of five members of the Active Staff and/or Active Outpatient Staff, including three past-presidents of the Medical Staff, whenever possible
- c. Approximately two months before the annual meeting of the Medical Staff, a representative of the Nominating Committee (the Medical Staff Office) will send an e-mail ballot to each Member of the Active Staff, Active Outpatient Staff, and Allied Health Staff requesting their vote. Each ballot shall contain the slate of candidates selected by the Nominating Committee for each office of the Medical Staff. A space on the ballot for write-in candidate(s) for each office shall also be included.
- d. Ballots shall be returned to the Medical Staff Office prior to the annual meeting and tabulated by Medical Staff Office personnel. Results will be confirmed by the Secretary/Treasurer and reported to the Medical Executive Committee prior to the annual meeting.
- e. The candidate for each office receiving the plurality of votes for that office shall be thereby elected to that office; provided, however, that at least a majority of the votes making up the plurality are cast by members of the Active Medical Staff and/or Active Outpatient Staff.
- f. The Secretary/Treasurer of the Medical Staff will be moderator of the tabulation of the votes.

- g. At-large members of the Medical Executive Committee shall be elected in the same manner as herein provided for election of officers of the Medical Staff; however, the Nominating Committee shall be the Medical Executive Committee

SECTION 4. Term of Office

All officers shall serve for a period of two years, or until a successor is elected. Officers shall take office on the first day of the calendar year.

SECTION 5. Resignation and Removal from Office

An officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Medical Executive Committee. Such resignation shall be effective as of the date such notice is delivered to the Medical Executive Committee or at such later time specified in the written notice.

SECTION 6. Vacancies in Office

The Medical Executive Committee shall fill vacancies in office during the term, except for the President. If there is a vacancy in the office of the President, the Vice-President shall serve out the remaining term.

SECTION 7. Duties of the Officers

- a. **Medical Staff President** shall serve as the chief administrative officer of the medical staff to:
 - 1. Act in coordination with the Hospital President and the VPMA in all matters of mutual concern within the Hospital;
 - 2. Preside at General Medical Staff meetings;
 - 3. Preside at Medical Executive Committee meetings;
 - 4. Serve as ex-officio member of all other Medical Staff committees, without vote;
 - 5. Be responsible for enforcement of Medical Staff Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and associated policies and procedures for implementation of sanctions where indicated, and for the Medical Staff's compliance with the procedural safeguards where corrective action has been requested;
 - 6. Present the views, policies, needs and grievances of the medical staff to the Hospital President, VPMA, and to the Board;
 - 7. Serve on the Board, ex officio, including as past-Medical Staff President for an additional two years;
 - 8. Receive and interpret the policies of the Board to the Medical Staff;
 - 9. Be spokesman for the Medical Staff in its external professional and public relations; and
 - 10. Act as Chief of Staff, overseeing the clinical work and being responsible for the clinical organization of the Hospital.

- b. **Medical Staff Vice-President** shall:

1. In the absence or disability of the President, discharge the functions of the President. In the absence or disability of both the President and the vice-president, the Medical Executive Committee shall appoint a president pro tempore;
2. Preside at meetings of the Credentials Committee; and
3. Carry out such duties as assigned by the President.

c. **Medical Staff Secretary/Treasurer** shall:

1. Preside at meetings of the Bylaws Committee;
2. Perform such other duties as ordinarily pertain to their office;
3. Keep accurate account of the financial status and financial transactions of the Medical Staff organization with assistance from the Medical Staff Office;
4. Render financial reports at the annual meeting of the Medical Staff; and
5. Oversee collection of Medical Staff dues as conducted by the Medical Staff Office.

ARTICLE X

CLINICAL DEPARTMENTS

SECTION 1. Departments

The Medical Staff shall be divided into Departments. The following is a list of the approved Departments and those Services assigned to each Department:

a. Department of Anesthesiology:

1. Anesthesiology
2. Pain Management

b. Department of Emergency Medicine

c. Department of Medicine/Family Practice:

1. Allergy & Immunology
2. Cardiovascular Diseases
3. Dermatology
4. Endocrinology
5. Gastroenterology
6. Hematology/Oncology (Medical and Radiation)
7. Hospitalists (includes Internal Medicine)
8. Infectious Diseases
9. Hospice and Palliative Care Medicine
10. Nephrology
11. Neurology
12. Outpatient Medicine (includes Internal Medicine, Family Medicine/Practice, and Pediatrics)
13. Physical and Rehabilitative Medicine
14. Psychiatry
15. Pulmonary/Critical Care/Sleep Medicine
16. Radiation Oncology
17. Rheumatology

d. Department of Orthopedics:

1. Orthopedic Surgery
2. Podiatry

e. Department of Pathology

f. Department of Radiology

g. Department of Surgery:

1. Cardiothoracic Surgery
2. General Surgery
3. Gynecology
4. Hyperbaric Oxygen/Wound Care Medicine
5. Neurosurgery
6. Ophthalmology
7. Oral Maxillofacial/Dental Surgery
8. Otolaryngology
9. Urology
10. Vascular Surgery

SECTION 2. Organization of Clinical Departments

Each Department shall have a Department Chief who shall be responsible for the overall supervision of the clinical work within the Department. All Members shall be assigned to the appropriate Department and/or Service that most closely reflects their professional training and experience, and the clinical area in which their practice is concentrated. A Member may be granted clinical privileges in one or more Departments or Services, and their exercise of clinical privileges is subject to the rules and regulations of that Department or Service and the authority of the Department Chief

SECTION 3. Department Chiefs

- a. A Department Chief is a Physician qualified for the position through certification by an appropriate specialty board or comparable clinical competence (affirmatively established through the credentialing process), training and experience within their specialty area and appropriate clinical privileges delineated in the Department so as to qualify for a leadership position. Each Department Chief shall be a member of the Active Staff, shall be nominated by the Medical Executive Committee, and appointed by the Board.
- b. When a Department Chief's position is vacant or to be vacated, a search committee shall be appointed by the President of the Medical Staff. It shall consist of at least four (4) Members, to include the President of the Medical Staff and the Chairman of the Credentials Committee. The committee shall first seek out and consider candidates for the position. In its deliberation, the Search Committee shall consider the recommendations of the Department involved. When the committee has concluded its search, it shall make specific recommendations to the Medical Executive Committee. The Medical Executive Committee shall then forward its recommendation for approval by the Board.
- c. The Medical Executive Committee, through appointment of an acting chief, shall fill an unexpected vacancy or absence of the Department Chief. This appointee shall act as the Department Chief until the search for a chief has concluded and is approved by the Board.

- d. Each Department Chief shall serve for a term of two years. Continued appointment may be based on the results of 360 evaluations performed in conjunction with the reappointment process.
- e. The 360 evaluation includes a survey of various individuals, including members of individual Departments/Services. If the 360 tool is used, the results are included as part of the reappointment evaluation. Recommendations for continued appointment will be made by the Medical Executive Committee, which will in turn make a recommendation to the Board.
- f. A Department Chief may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Medical Executive Committee. Such resignation shall take effect on the date of receipt or at any later time specified in the written notice.
- g. Removal of a Department Chief during their term may be initiated by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of all the Active Staff and Active Outpatient Staff of the Department, or by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Medical Executive Committee. No removal shall be effective unless and until it has been ratified by the Medical Executive Committee and the Board. Removal of a Department Chief during their term of office shall not otherwise affect their status on the Medical Staff. Permissible grounds for removal include, but are not limited to, failure to perform the functions of the position in a timely and appropriate manner, and failure to continuously satisfy the qualifications for the position, and failure to adhere to the Medical Staff Bylaws, Rules and Regulations.

SECTION 4. Functions of a Department Chief

The Department Chief shall:

- a. Be accountable to the Medical Executive Committee and through it to the Board for all professional and administrative activities within their Department unless otherwise provided for by the Hospital. The Department Chief shall ensure that minutes are taken at all Department and Service meetings and that such minutes are referred to the Medical Executive Committee for review.
- b. Collaborate with Hospital Administration to ensure that rules and regulations, policies and procedures adopted by the Medical Staff and Hospital are followed by their Department members.
- c. Be accountable for enforcement of Hospital and Medical Staff Bylaws, Rules and Regulations within their Department in concert with the Medical Executive Committee and Medical Staff President.
- d. Be responsible for implementation within their Department of actions taken by the Medical Executive Committee.

- e. Document, for Credentials Committee review at the time of initial appointment and reappointment, their recommendations for membership and clinical privileges for each Department Member based on qualifications and current clinical competence relevant to the care provided in the Department.
- f. Develop and maintain criteria for clinical privileges for their Department.
- g. Work with Hospital Administration including the President of the Hospital and VPMA to ensure that each Member of their Department fulfills their responsibilities to the Hospital. This shall include timely completion of medical records and attendance at Department, general Medical Staff, and committee meetings.
- h. Assess and recommend to the relevant Hospital authority off-site sources for needed patient care and education services not provided by the Department or the Hospital.
- i. Participate in the coordination and integration of interdepartmental and intradepartmental services.
- j. Determine the qualifications and current competence of Department or Service personnel who are not licensed independent practitioners and who provide patient care and education services.
- k. Assist in the appropriate orientation to the Hospital and Medical Staff for each of their Department Members and provide for the continuing education of all persons in the Department, as appropriate.
- l. Assist Hospital Administration in determining the space and other resources needed by the Department members.
- m. Access the services of the VPMA to support their duties as listed above.
- n. Designate a member of the Department to function in their absence.

SECTION 5. Functions of Departments

- a. Each Department shall establish a mechanism to ensure the continuous assessment and improvement of the quality of care and services within the Department.
- b. At least quarterly, each Department will review performance improvement/peer review activities. The minutes of the meeting will include the findings, conclusions and recommendations as well as analysis of any trends/problems.

SECTION 6. Future Departments and Services

Upon recommendation of the Medical Executive Committee, the Board may add or remove Departments or Services.

SECTION 7. Regular Meetings

- a. Departments shall hold regular meetings at least four (4) times per year to review and evaluate the clinical work of Members practicing in the Department.
- b. Meetings must be conducted through a means that allows interactive participation and may include e-mail, teleconference, real-time video and/or face-to-face meetings.
- c. If a Member fails to meet attendance requirements as outlined in their Medical Staff obligations, the Department Chief shall notify the Member and the Medical Executive Committee in writing.
- d. A Member who has attended a patient whose case is to be presented for clinical discussion shall be notified at least seven (7) days in advance of such meeting by the Department Chief and shall be requested to be present.

SECTION 8. Special Meetings

A special meeting of the Department may be called by or at the request of the Department Chief, the President of the Medical Staff, or by one third (1/3) of the Department's Members, but not by less than two (2) Members.

SECTION 9. Quorum

Fifty percent (50%) of the voting Members of a Department, but not less than two (2) Members, one being a Physician, shall constitute a quorum at any Department or Service meeting.

SECTION 10. Manner of Action

- a. The action of a majority of the Members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the action of the Department.
- b. Action may be taken without a meeting by unanimous written consent of the Department's Members.

SECTION 11. Minutes

- a. Minutes of each regular and special Department and/or Service meeting shall be prepared and shall include a record of the attendance of Members and the vote taken on each matter.
- b. The minutes shall be sent to the appropriate body (e.g., Medical Executive Committee, Department Chief, etc.).

- c. Each Department and Service shall maintain a permanent file of the minutes of each meeting.

ARTICLE XI

COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. Purpose

Committees are delegated to perform such functions and to carry out such responsibilities of the Medical Staff as outlined in these Bylaws and to provide a forum for the ongoing review of clinical care rendered by the Medical Staff. Committees also assist the Medical Staff and the Board in complying with the goals and objectives of Hospital-wide and Medical Staff quality improvement plans. Unless otherwise provided for in these Bylaws, all committees shall report to the Medical Executive Committee, which shall provide general oversight of all such committees.

SECTION 2. Meetings

A special meeting of any committee may be called by, or at the request of, the Chairman, the President of the Medical Staff, or one-third (1/3) of the Committee's members, but not by less than two (2) members.

Meetings must be conducted through a means that allows interactive participation and may include e-mail, teleconference, real-time video and/or face-to-face meetings.

SECTION 3. Quorum

Fifty percent (50%) of the voting members of a committee, but not less than two (2) members, shall constitute a quorum at any meeting. At least one Physician Member of the Medical Staff must be present to conduct business.

SECTION 4. Manner of Action

The action of a majority of the voting members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the action of the committee. Action may be taken without a meeting by unanimous written consent of the committee's members, which may be obtained electronically.

SECTION 5. Rights of Ex-Officio Members

Persons serving as ex-officio members of a committee shall have rights and privileges of regular members, except that they shall not be entitled to vote and shall not be counted in determining the existence of a quorum.

SECTION 6. Minutes

Minutes of each regular and special meeting of a committee shall be prepared and include a record of attendance and the vote taken on each matter. The minutes shall document discussion, decisions, votes, remedial actions, follow up to all issues and report all activities and findings. The minutes shall be sent

to the Medical Executive Committee. A permanent file of the minutes shall be maintained for each committee.

The chairperson of a committee may, upon the request of the Medical Executive Committee, be invited to attend the Medical Executive Committee for the purpose of giving a report in person.

SECTION 7. Attendance Requirements

Each committee member shall be assigned attendance obligations appropriate to their level of activity at the Hospital.

SECTION 8. Appointment

Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the Medical Executive Committee shall make appointments to all committees and designate the chairperson. Initial committee appointments shall be for a period of two (2) years. The chairperson of each committee shall be a Physician. The President of the Medical Staff and the President of the Hospital, or their designees, shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of all committees, except that the President of the Medical Staff shall be a voting member of the Medical Executive Committee.

SECTION 9. Standing Committees of the Medical Staff

There shall be the following standing committees:

1. Bylaws Committee
2. Credentials Committee
3. Infection Prevention and Control Committee
4. Medical Executive Committee
5. Covenant Health Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee
6. Professional Practice Evaluation Committee
7. Radiation Safety Committee
8. Utilization Management
9. Tissue and Transfusion Committee
10. Antimicrobial Stewardship

SECTION 10. Medical Executive Committee

a. Membership

1. The executive authority of the Medical Staff shall be vested in the Medical Executive Committee which shall have the duty of coordinating the professional activities and general policies of the various Departments and have such other functions and responsibilities as are provided in these Bylaws and the Bylaws of the Hospital. The majority of Medical Executive Committee membership shall be Members of the Active and/or Active Outpatient Staff.

2. The Medical Executive Committee shall consist of the following members:

- President of the Medical Staff
- Vice President of the Medical Staff
- Secretary/Treasurer of the Medical Staff
- Immediate Past President of Medical Staff
- Department Chief, Anesthesia Department
- Chief, Emergency Medicine
- Department Chief, Medicine/Family Practice
- Department Chief, Orthopedics
- Department Chief, Pathology
- Department Chief, Radiology
- Department Chief, Surgery
- Service Leader, Hospitalist Program
- IMG Director
- Members-at-Large (4)
- Allied Health Representative

3. The four (4) members-at-large shall be elected by the Medical Staff as provided in Article IX, Section 3 of these Bylaws.
4. If the President of the Medical Staff is the Department Chief, and thus serving on the Medical Executive Committee by virtue of both positions, the Department may elect an additional member to the Medical Executive Committee for the term of office of the President.
5. There shall also be the following non-voting, ex-officio members:
 - a) The President of the Hospital or designee,
 - b) The VPMA, and
 - c) The Chief Nursing Officer or designee.
6. Any member of the Medical Executive Committee may resign at any time by giving written notice to the President of the Medical Staff. Such resignation takes effect on the date of receipt or at any later time specified in the written notice.

- b. **Duties.** The duties of the Medical Executive Committee shall be as follows:

1. To represent and act on behalf of the Medical Staff in the intervals between Medical Staff meetings, subject to such limitations as provided in these Bylaws.
2. To coordinate the activities and general policies of the various Departments/Services.
3. To review and act on reports of all Medical Staff committees, Departments, Services and other assigned activity groups.
4. To implement policies of the Medical Staff not otherwise the responsibility of the Department/Service.
5. To provide liaison between the Medical Staff, the President of the Hospital, and the Board.
6. To recommend action to the President of the Hospital on matters of a medical administrative nature.
7. To fulfill the Medical Staff's accountability to the Board for the medical care rendered

- (quality and patient safety) to patients in the Hospital.
8. To make recommendations regarding the mechanism designed to review credentials applications and delineate individual clinical privileges.
 9. To review credentialing applications and requests for delineation of clinical privileges of applicants for appointment and reappointment to membership of the Medical Staff and to make recommendations to the Board for membership, assignments to Departments/Services, and delineation of clinical privileges.
 10. To organize the Medical Staff's performance improvement activities and establish a mechanism designed to conduct, evaluate and revise such activities.
 11. To annually approve the written Quality Assessment/Performance Improvement Plan and ensure it is an integral part of the Hospital's Performance Improvement Plan.
 12. To annually approve the following key guiding Plans, Assessments & Goals for the upcoming year: Quality and Patient Safety Plan (which includes the Medical Staff Quality Plan), Infection Prevention Plan, Utilization Management Plan, and to submit their recommendations to the Board for final approval.
 13. To take all reasonable steps to ensure professionally ethical conduct and competent clinical performance on the part of all Members, including the initiation of and/or participation in Medical Staff corrective or review measures when warranted.
 14. To be responsible for investigation of any reports of breach of Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, associated policies and procedures, ethics, standards of professional behavior, clinical competence or other deviations from standards of practice.
 15. Report activities during each meeting of the General Medical Staff.
 16. Assure Medical Staff participate in system wide committees and other system wide policies, such as Utilization Management.
 17. To appointment Medical Directors of Anesthesia Services, Respiratory Care Services, Nuclear Medicine Services, and Emergency Services
- c. **Meetings.** The Medical Executive Committee shall meet at least ten (10) times a year and send minutes in a timely manner to the Board for review.

SECTION 11. Credentials Committee

The Credentials Committee has the primary responsibility of reviewing and making recommendations on each Application, including initial appointment, reappointment and modification of clinical privileges, for Medical Staff membership and clinical privileges. It develops, reviews and recommends the criteria for each clinical privilege. It is responsible for reviewing questions of clinical competence and the behavior of all Members and making recommendations to the Medical Executive Committee following such reviews.

a. Membership

1. The Credentials Committee shall include at least six (6) Members of the Active and/or Active Outpatient Staff representing various specialty areas, and one Member of the Allied Health staff. Department Chiefs/Service Leaders shall not be members of the Credentials Committee.

2. The chairperson of the Credentials Committee shall be the Vice President of the Medical Staff.
3. Whenever the Credentials Committee reviews Applications for appointment or reappointment that require additional input from specific specialty areas, additional individuals may be invited to meetings or to provide consultation, as needed, by the chairman of the committee.

b. Duties

1. The Credentials Committee shall be an investigational and advisory body only. It shall investigate the credentials and qualifications of each applicant for membership on the Medical Staff. The committee may interview the applicant and shall recommend to the Medical Executive Committee whether the application should be accepted, modified, deferred, or rejected as elsewhere provided in these Bylaws. It shall recommend the category, classification, departmental assignment and delineation of privileges in conformity with these Bylaws.
2. It shall investigate the qualifications of Members in consideration of reappointment, and each request for modification of clinical privileges, and shall make appropriate and specific recommendations to the Medical Executive Committee in these matters.

SECTION 12. Tissue and Transfusion Committee

- a. **Membership.** The Tissue and Transfusion Committee shall consist of at least five (5) Members of the Active and/or Active Outpatient Staff from various areas such as general surgery, orthopedics, gynecology, pathology, anesthesiology, the inpatient care/hospitalist Service, and emergency medicine, and one (1) member of the Allied Health Staff. It shall also include the blood bank supervisor, Director of Quality/PI or their designee, and representatives from nursing services and administration.

b. Duties

1. Operative and other invasive and non-invasive procedure review shall be performed for cases in which a specimen was removed, for all cases in which there is a major discrepancy between the preoperative, postoperative and histological diagnoses and for a sampling of those cases in which no specimen was removed. The review criteria shall be consistent with current regulatory requirements.
2. It shall review blood and blood component transfusions for proper utilization. The review criteria shall be consistent with current regulatory requirements.
3. It shall review all significant transfusion reactions.

- c. **Meetings.** The Tissue and Transfusion Committee shall meet at least quarterly and on call of the chairperson.

SECTION 13. Bylaws Committee

- a. **Membership.** The Bylaws Committee shall consist of at least five (5) Members of the Active and/or Active Outpatient Staff, one (1) member of the Allied Health Staff, and a representative from Administration.
- b. **Duties.** The committee shall review the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of the Medical Staff every two years and may recommend amendments and changes whenever the need may arise. These recommendations shall be submitted to the Medical Executive Committee and General Medical Staff for their review and recommendations to the Board.
- c. **Meetings.** The Bylaws Committee shall meet at least quarterly and upon the call of the chairperson.

SECTION 14. Professional Practice Evaluation Committee

a. Membership

- 1. The Professional Practice Evaluation Committee members shall consist of the Department Chief of Surgery or designee, Department Chief of Medicine/Family Practice, Medical Director of St. Joseph Internal Medicine (or designee), a non-employed member of the Medical Staff, one member of the Allied Health Staff, and the Medical Director of Quality Improvement who shall serve as the chairperson. The Director of Quality/PI will serve as a non-voting member. The Medical Executive Committee may appoint an appropriate designee for any committee member should the need arise.
- 2. Additional Members may be requested to provide consultation to the committee during a review should their expertise be required to ensure a thorough and objective evaluation. External peer review services may be utilized by the committee if deemed appropriate.
- 3. Partners, associates or relatives of a Member under review shall not participate in the final disposition.

b. Duties

- 1. It shall have the responsibility to develop and implement a Professional Practice Review Plan to ensure open and honest communication and full review of available information and to ensure the proceedings of the Professional Practice Evaluation Committee be protected from disclosure, as required by state and federal law and regulations.
- 2. It shall assess the performance of Members and use the results of such assessments to improve patient safety, quality and efficiency of health care services provided by the Hospital as outlined in the Medical Staff Professional Practice Review Policy.

c. Meetings

- 1. The Professional Practice Evaluation Committee shall meet at least quarterly and on call of the chairperson and submit minutes of each meeting in a timely manner to the Credentials Committee for review.

2. Whenever a suspected deviation from standard clinical or professional practice is identified, the committee chair may require the Member to confer with the committee regarding the alleged deviation.

SECTION 15. Quality Senate

The Quality Senate provides oversight of the organization-wide Quality Management System (QMS). The Quality Senate receives and evaluates reports for outcomes and effectiveness for QAPI, internal audits, patient safety and organization quality outcome reports via dashboards, scorecards and presentations.

SECTION 16. Infection Prevention and Control Committee

- a. **Membership.** As outlined in the current Infection Prevention and Control Plan policy.
- b. **Duties**
 1. It shall have the responsibility of investigating infections occurring among patients and personnel, and of making recommendations for the control of such infections and any other situations which might contribute to hospital hazards for patients and personnel. It shall develop a practical system for reporting, evaluating, and keeping records to ensure that endemic levels, and well as epidemic levels of infection will be brought to the attention of the Medical Executive Committee.
 2. It shall provide assistance in the development of the Hospital's personnel health programs.
 3. It shall recommend standards of sanitation and medical asepsis, as well as the procedures used for isolation.
- c. **Meetings**
 1. The Infection Prevention and Control Committee shall meet at least quarterly and on call of the chairperson.
 2. The Chairperson and the Infection Preventionist meet routinely to ensure the Infection Prevention & Control meetings are addressing relevant issues.

SECTION 17. Radiation Safety Committee

- a. **Membership.** The Radiation Safety Committee shall consist of an authorized user for each type of use permitted by license (i.e., Pathology, Radiology, Nuclear Medicine), a representative of Administration, the Radiation Safety Officer, and the Physicist Consultant. The Radiation Safety Officer will be the Committee chairperson and, as such, preside over all meetings.
- b. **Duties**
 1. Discussing any radiation safety problems requiring a general solution.
 2. Determining whether current procedures are maintaining exposures ALARA.

3. Considering new proposals for the use of radionuclides and evaluating the safety of those uses and the qualifications of the users.
 4. Auditing the Radiation Safety Program to ensure that it meets all goals and all pertinent regulations.
 5. The duties and functions of this Committee will be consistent with the guidelines specified by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
- c. **Meetings.** The Radiation Safety Committee shall meet at least quarterly and upon call of the chairperson. A quorum must include the Radiation Safety Officer and the Administration representative.

SECTION 18. Medical Staff Health and Advocacy Committee

- a. **Composition.** The Medical Executive Committee shall appoint at least four (4) Members as the Medical Staff Health & Advocacy Committee.
- b. **Duties.** The Medical Staff Health & Advocacy Committee shall meet as necessary, and shall carry out the following objectives:
1. Education of Medical Staff on issues related to Member health and impairment,
 2. Encouraging, initiating, or assisting any endeavor to improve the health and well-being of all Members, and
 3. Identifying and providing assistance to any Member whose ability to provide safe and/or competent medical care to patients may be compromised due to personal or work-related stress, medical or psychological impairment, alcohol, chemical or substance abuse/dependency, or other potentially impairing condition.
- c. **Purpose.** The purpose of this process is assistance, rather than discipline, in order to aid a Member in retaining or regaining optimal professional functions, consistent with protection of patients. Nothing in this Section is intended to preclude or limit the use of the regular corrective action process under these Bylaws whenever such action is deemed necessary and appropriate.
- d. **Referrals.** The Medical Staff Health & Advocacy Committee may receive referrals from any source, including self-referral. Upon receipt of the referral, a subcommittee of two members of the Committee who have no, or limited conflict of interest, will be delegated to review the referral. This review shall include:
1. Contact with the referral source(s) to learn specific details of the precipitating event(s), including names of witnesses, if any, who will be contacted, and
 2. A discussion of the referral with the identified Member.
- e. **Report.** Upon completion of its review the subcommittee shall prepare a detailed written report, which shall be reviewed by the Committee. If after review of the subcommittee report, the Committee determines that the facts support a conclusion of a Member health issue causing an impairment, or potentially impairing condition, in clinical performance or actions/activities

which impact others, sufficient to compromise, or threaten to compromise, patient, staff, or public safety, or lower the quality of care below prevailing standards, or support a conclusion of impairment, a referral will be made to the Maine Medical Association Medical Professionals Health Program or other appropriate resource. The Committee may also recommend further remedial action.

- f. **Remedial Action.** The Committee may implement remedial action or recommend that it be implemented by the President of the Hospital, without engaging in the corrective action process, through execution of a confidential written agreement with the affected Member. The agreement shall provide that any breach of the agreement may result in summary suspension and corrective action under the terms of these Bylaws. The agreement may be modified by agreement of all parties upon recommendation of the Medical Staff Health & Advocacy Committee. The agreement shall remain in effect until the Medical Staff Health & Advocacy Committee recommends change or discontinuation. If either is recommended, a written agreement for review and monitoring of activities will be substituted including a detailed delineation of the monitoring process. Final discontinuation of remediation will be recommended by the Medical Staff Health & Advocacy Committee and shall be subject to approval by the Medical Executive Committee.

- G. If a Member refuses to comply with the agreement or if the Medical Staff Health & Advocacy Committee determines that the Member has failed to comply with the terms of the agreement, it shall immediately notify the President of the Hospital. In accordance with the terms of the agreement, clinical privileges may be summarily suspended, and a corrective action process initiated as provided in these Bylaws.

- H. **Records.** All records of the Committee shall be kept in a separate secure file in the Medical Staff office. Such files shall be maintained separately from Credentials or Personnel files. Confidentiality will be maintained except as limited by law, ethical obligation, or when the safety of a patient is threatened and access to this file will be limited to members of the Medical Staff Health & Advocacy Committee for as long as written remedial agreements are not breached. If a breach occurs, the file may be reviewed as a part of the corrective action process.

SECTION 19. Joint Conference Committee

- a. **Membership.** The Joint Conference Committee shall consist of the President of the Medical Staff, the Chairman of the Board, and the Hospital President. Other committee members will have equal representation of Medical Staff members appointed by the Medical Staff President, and non-physician members of the Board appointed by the Chairman of the Board. The VPMA may be a member, without vote, at the discretion of the Medical Staff President and Chairman of the Board.

- b. **Duties**
 - 1. Acting as a medical-administrative-governance liaison committee between the Board, the Medical Staff, and Hospital Administration;

2. Acting as the deliberative body on matters of policy, Medical Staff Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, including resolution by supermajority vote of any conflict between the Board and the Medical Staff regarding the adoption or revision of Medical Staff Bylaws, Rules and Regulations. A supermajority vote shall require the affirmative vote of at least three (3) members of the Committee;
3. Acting as a forum for reviewing and identifying issues requiring collaboration between the Board and the Medical Staff and referring such issues to appropriate Medical Staff or Board Committees for further action;
4. Acting as a source of education on topics which may have significance to Hospital/Medical Staff relationships; and
5. Acting on agenda items from the Chairperson of the Board, President of the Medical Staff, and Hospital President.

c. **Minutes.** Minutes will be maintained.

SECTION 20. Future Committees

a. From time to time it may be desirable to add, remove, or consolidate standing committees in the structure of the Medical Staff. The Medical Executive Committee in this regard shall make recommendations to the Board. Action by the Board in such matters shall constitute an amendment to these Bylaws and shall not require compliance with the provisions of Article XIV.

b. Special Committees

1. The Medical Executive Committee and the President of the Medical Staff may appoint special committees from time to time for such purposes, as it may deem appropriate. Tenure and authority of such committees shall be defined at the time of appointment, but their tenure shall not exceed one year.
2. Such committees shall confine their work to the fulfillment of their purpose for which they were created and shall report to the Medical Executive Committee. They shall have no power of action unless authority of the Executive Committee specifically grants such. Minutes shall be kept of all meetings of such committees and submitted in a timely manner to the Medical Executive Committee for review.

ARTICLE XII

MEDICAL STAFF MEETINGS

SECTION 1. Regular Meetings

The Medical Staff shall hold two regular meetings each year. The regular meetings shall be held in April and October, unless the President of the Medical Staff, with approval of the Medical Executive Committee, designates that either meeting be held during a different month.

SECTION 2. The Annual Meeting

Generally, the regular meeting held in October shall serve as the Annual Meeting of the Medical Staff.

SECTION 3. Special Meetings

- a. Special meetings of the Medical Staff may be called at any time by the President of the Medical Staff, at the request of the Board, the Medical Executive Committee or upon the written request of any ten (10) Members.
- b. Written notice shall be given to each Medical Staff Member and such written notice shall indicate the purpose of such special meeting.
- c. A special meeting shall be limited to discussion and action of the specific purpose indicated in the notice of the meeting.

SECTION 4. Notice of Meetings

Notice of the annual, regular and special meetings of the Medical Staff shall be mailed, e-mailed or hand delivered by Medical Staff Office personnel on behalf of the Secretary of the Medical Staff at least one week prior to such meeting.

SECTION 5. Participation and Quorum

Members may participate either in person or via tele/video conference. Those Members in attendance shall constitute a quorum.

SECTION 6. Action of Medical Staff Meetings

Upon the adoption of motions at regular and special meetings of the Medical Staff, all such decisions shall be forwarded to the Board through the Medical Executive Committee for action.

SECTION 7. Attendance at Meetings

Attendance at Medical Staff meetings is strongly encouraged.

ARTICLE XIII

AMENDMENTS TO RULES AND REGULATIONS, EXHIBITS, AND APPENDICES

SECTION 1. Rules and Regulations of the Medical Staff

Subject to approval by the Board, the Medical Staff shall adopt such rules and regulations as may be necessary to implement more specifically the general principles found within these Bylaws. These shall relate to the proper conduct of Medical Staff organizational activities as well as embody the level of practice that is required of each Member. Such rules and regulations shall be a part of these Bylaws, except that they may be amended or repealed at any regular Medical Staff meeting at which a quorum is present and without previous notice, or at any special meeting on notice, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those Members present and eligible to vote. Such changes shall become effective when approved by the Board.

ARTICLE XIV

ADOPTION OF AND AMENDMENTS TO MEDICAL STAFF BYLAWS

SECTION 1. Regular Review of Bylaws

These Bylaws shall be reviewed by a Bylaws Committee appointed by the Medical Executive Committee not less than once every two (2) years for consideration of revisions that may be necessary or advisable.

SECTION 2. Authority to Propose Amendments

The Medical Executive Committee, Bylaws Committee, Officers of the Medical Staff, and voting Members shall have the authority to propose amendments to these Bylaws Rules and Regulations, and policies of the Medical Staff.

SECTION 3. Medical Executive Committee Review and Recommendation

Proposed amendments shall be referred to the Medical Executive Committee which shall review and make a recommendation to the Medical Staff for approval, rejection, or modification.

SECTION 4. Medical Staff Approval of Recommendation

Affirmation or rejection of a Medical Executive Committee recommendation to amend the Bylaws shall require a majority vote of the voting Members. Affirmation or rejection of a Medical Executive Committee recommendation to amend Medical Staff Rules and Regulations or Medical Staff Policies, shall require a majority vote of the voting Members present at any regular or special Medical Staff meeting at which a quorum is present.

SECTION 5. Urgent or Technical Action by Medical Executive Committee

In the event of a documented need for a technical clarification or an urgent amendment to the Medical Staff Bylaws and Rules and Regulations is necessary to comply with law or regulation, the Medical Executive Committee may provisionally approve such urgent amendments and submit such to the Board for provisional approval without prior notification to the Medical Staff. The Medical Executive Committee shall then notify the Medical Staff immediately after submitting any such technical clarification or urgent amendment and seek Medical Staff approval pursuant to Section 4.

SECTION 6. Medical Staff Disagreement with Medical Executive Committee Action

The voting Members may propose revisions to any amendment provisionally approved pursuant to Section 5.

SECTION 7. Medical Executive Committee and Medical Staff Disagreement

Should the Medical Staff, at a meeting at which a quorum is present, and acting by a two-thirds (2/3) vote for Bylaws amendment or a majority vote for Medical Staff Rules and Regulations and Policies amendments, reject the recommendations of the Medical Executive Committee made pursuant to Section 5, the matter shall be referred by either the Medical Staff or the Medical Executive Committee to the Joint Conference Committee for further consideration.

SECTION 8. Medical Staff Authority to Adopt

The Medical Staff has the right to adopt Medical Staff Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and Policies, and amendments thereto, and to propose them directly to the Board without review or recommendation from the Medical Executive Committee. Such direct action requires approval by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting Members for Bylaws changes or a majority vote of the voting Members for Medical Staff Rules and Regulations and Policies changes.

SECTION 9. Board Approval

Upon approval of amendments to the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, or Medical Staff policies, the President, acting on behalf of the Medical Staff, shall propose such amendments directly to the Board. Such amendments shall be effective only when approved by the Board. In the event that the Board does not approve such proposed amendments, the matter will be referred to the Joint Conference Committee for further deliberations and recommendations.

SECTION 10. Board Amendment Initiation

The Medical Staff Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, or policies shall not be unilaterally amended by either the Board or the Medical Staff.

ARTICLE XV

RULES AND REGULATIONS

SECTION 1. Admission and Discharge of Patients

- a. The Hospital shall accept all patients for care and treatment for which the appropriate facilities and staff exist. All patients will be seen and evaluated for appropriateness of hospitalization at St. Joseph Hospital, stabilized if necessary and suitable disposition made.
- b. Authority to Admit Patients: A patient may only be admitted to the Hospital by a member of the Medical Staff with admitting privileges in good standing. The admission order should clearly indicate an order class, i.e., "inpatient." Admission orders are entered into the electronic medical record only.
- c. Limitation on Admissions: Whenever bed availability is limited, it may not be possible to accommodate all admissions scheduled for a specific day. In that event, the VPMA or their designee shall prioritize the cases by condition and will make the decision regarding admission. In making that decision, the VPMA or designee will seek input from the attending Physician, consult with the nursing supervisor, and give due consideration to the inconvenience caused to the patient and/or their family.
- d. Any member of the Medical Staff who is not available within thirty (30) minutes of the hospital shall name a member of the Medical Staff who is available within thirty (30) minutes who may be called to attend patients in an emergency. In case of failure to name such a physician, the President of the Hospital shall have the authority to call any member of the Medical Staff should it be necessary.
- e. The admitting Practitioner shall be held responsible for providing such information as may be necessary to assure the protection of the patient from self-harm and to assure the protection of others whenever the patient might be a source of danger from any cause whatever, see the Hospital's Precautions for Homicidal Patients, 3-134 and Suicide Prevention Policy.
- f. The admitting practitioner is required to document the medical need for hospitalization of each patient. The daily progress notes must reflect the need for continued hospitalization, reference Provider Documentation Requirement for the Medical Record 4007b. The Admitting or attending Physician, or their designee, shall observe and conduct a clinical evaluation of the patient within twelve (12) hours of decision to admit.
- g. The attending Physician or Allied Health Practitioner shall determine that a patient is stable for discharge or transfer. Patients shall be discharged or transferred only on the order of the attending Physician or their designee with appropriate clinical privileges. If a patient leaves the Hospital against the advice of the attending Physician or without a proper discharge the Hospital's Policy "Patients Leaving against Medical Advice or Elopement, 1-003," as may be amended from time to time, shall be followed.

- h. In the event of a hospital death the deceased shall be pronounced dead by the attending Practitioner or their designee. See the Hospital's Determination of Death in DNR Patients Terminally Ill, Expected to Die, 3-086 policy.
- i. Medical Examiner Cases. Whenever a death occurs under unusual circumstances the Medical Examiner shall be notified and the Hospital's "Post-Mortem Care-Body Release-Autopsy and ME Criteria" policy, as may be amended from time to time, shall be followed.
- j. Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act ("EMTALA"). For purposes of complying with EMTALA and the Hospital's "EMTALA: Transfer Policy, RI1.034," as may be amended from time to time, all physician members of the Active, Active Outpatient, Courtesy and Consulting Medical Staff are authorized to conduct a medical screening examination ("MSE") to determine if an emergency medical condition exists or to determine, after a reasonable period of observation, whether a woman experiencing contractions is in false labor. Physician Associate and Advance Practice Nurse members of the Advanced Practice Professional Staff, acting within the scope of their license and/or certification, may also be credentialed to perform MSEs and/or to determine, after a reasonable period of observation, whether a woman experiencing contractions is in false labor. All such Practitioners shall be considered Qualified Medical Personnel ("QMP") under EMTALA.

SECTION 2. Medical Records

- a. **General Requirements.** A medical record shall be prepared for every patient receiving care at the Hospital or any of its facilities and will contain information to justify inpatient care, continued hospitalization, and outpatient services. The medical record shall support the diagnoses, describe the patient's progress and response to medications and services, and should demonstrate continuity of care among providers. Each Practitioner will be responsible for the timely, complete, accurate, and legible completion of the portions of the medical record that pertain to the care they provide.
- b. **Authority to Make Medical Record Entries.** Only individuals authorized by licensure, certification and clinical privileges at the Hospital are authorized to sign, date and time entries in medical records and the identity of the author shall be set forth in the record and authenticated.
- c. **Authentication.** Authentication means to establish unique authorship by signature, electronic signature, or identifiable initials in accordance with the Hospital's Authentication of Clinical Entries policy.
- d. **Forms and Templates.** All forms and templates used for medical record documentation, both printed and electronic, must be pre-approved by the Hospital.
- e. **Symbols and Abbreviations.** Only nationally recognized and published terminology, definitions, abbreviations, acronyms, symbols and dose designations may be used in the medical record (e.g., see The Joint Commission *Do Not Use* abbreviations standard), and the Covenant Health

Abbreviations Policy.

- f. **Correction of Errors.** Corrections to paper components of the medical record shall be made by inserting a single line through the entry; the author shall time, date and sign this correction. When a dictated or electronic entry requires correction, the author shall dictate or enter an electronic addendum to the original entry.
- g. **Copying and pasting.** Copying and pasting between notes is not encouraged. If done, the record must be properly updated. Repeated instances may be referred to the Medical Executive Committee for disciplinary action.
- h. **Ownership of Record.** Medical records are the physical property of the Hospital and shall not be removed from the premises or disseminated electronically except with the approval of the Vice President of Medical Affairs in consultation with the Medical Records custodian, by a subpoena, court order, regulatory request, or in accordance with federal and state law and Hospital policy.
- i. **Permanent Filing of Medical Records.** A medical record shall not be permanently filed until it is completed by the responsible Practitioner, or it is ordered filed by the Medical Executive Committee. The medical record of a care delivery instance shall be completed in no more than thirty (30) days after such instance. In the event that a medical record remains incomplete by reason of death, resignation, or other inability or unavailability of the responsible Practitioner to complete the record, the Medical Executive Committee shall consider the circumstances and may enter such reasons in the record and order the record filed. The process of administrative closure of a medical record is detailed in the Hospital's Administrative Closure of Electronic Medical Records by Provider Policy.
- j. **Medical Record Completion.** The attending Physician, or their representative, shall be responsible for the preparation of a complete medical record for each of their patients. The final obligation for completion of the medical record rests with the attending Physician of record.
- k. **Timeliness.** All entries in the medical record shall be made in a timely manner so as not to impair appropriate continuity of care for the patient and in accordance with Hospital policy. Medical records shall be completed no later than thirty (30) days from discharge/registration of an outpatient, unless otherwise approved by the Hospital President. Each Hospital Department may establish policies defining acceptable timeframes within which certain medical records shall be completed; provided, however, that such timeframes shall be no longer than the specific timeframes set forth in these Rules and Regulations.

The following documents must be available in the medical record and authenticated within the following timeframes and will be considered delinquent if not completed within the above timeframe, unless otherwise specifically stated in these Rules.

1. History and physical: within 24 hours of admission, observation stay, surgery, or anesthesia care.

2. Full operative/procedure note within twenty-four (24) hours of surgery/procedure. If this note is dictated, a brief operative/procedure note must be entered into the chart before the patient moves to the next level of care. If a complete Operative report is not available in the electronic medical record, such as in the case of dictation, before the transfer to the next level of care a Brief Operative Note (details listed in 3.n.12) must be documented immediately after the procedure. In either circumstance, a documentation note must be in the electronic medical record prior to patient transfer to the next level of care.
 3. Emergency department provider clinical report: at the time of service but no later than seventy-two (72) hours following discharge/transfer of the patient from the Emergency Department.
 4. Discharge/Death summary: Should be completed on the day of discharge but in no event later than fifteen (15) days after discharge or death, as applicable.
- l. **Demographic Content.** The medical record shall include at least the following demographic information, the patient's:
1. Name,
 2. Address,
 3. Date of birth,
 4. Legally authorized representative, if any,
 5. Legal sex,
 6. Legal status if receiving behavioral health services, and
 7. Any language and/or communication needs.
- m. **Advance Healthcare Directive.** Any advanced healthcare directive provided by a patient, the patient's family or surrogate shall be entered into the patient's medical record.
- n. **Clinical Content.**
1. **History and Physical ("H&P").** The Admitting or attending Physician shall document a comprehensive H&P in the medical record of each patient admitted to the Hospital. A H&P may be delegated to and performed by a Physician Associate or Nurse Practitioner who is a member of the Allied Health Staff. An H&P is also required for all patients undergoing surgeries and invasive procedures, regardless of inpatient status, as outlined below. Invasive procedures are defined as the surgical entry into tissues, cavities, or organs and in addition, will include but need not be limited to the following:
 - a) Any procedures performed in the operating room,
 - b) Any procedure in which moderate or deep sedation or anesthesia is used, and,
 - c) Any of the following, may only require an outpatient assessment (See Section 5 below)
 - i. Endoscopy
 - ii. Transesophageal Echocardiogram (TEE)
 - iii. Therapeutic Nerve Blocks
 - iv. Central Line Insertions (involving primary entry into a major vessel)
 - v. Cardioversion
 - vi. Pacemakers

- vii. Defibrillation
- viii. Abdominal and/or Intrathoracic Biopsy/Aspiration
- ix. Insertion of Chest Tube

2. Inpatient Admissions.

- a) A comprehensive History and Physical examination must be performed and documented in the medical record no more than 30 days before or 24 hours after admission or registration.
- b) When the History and Physical examination is completed prior to the admission/Observation Stay or registration, but within 30 days of such event, an update to the patient's condition, including any changes in the patient's condition since the date of the original History and Physical, must be recorded within 24 hours after admission or registration. If there are no changes, it must be documented.

3. Observation Stay (Inpatient or Emergency Department).

A comprehensive History and Physical examination or ED note that contains the comprehensive History and Physical elements must be performed and documented in the medical record at the time an Observation Stay is ordered.

4. Outpatient and Inpatient Surgical and Invasive Procedures, Procedures involving general, spinal, or other major regional anesthesia, outpatient diagnostic, and therapeutic invasive vascular procedures.

- a) A comprehensive History and Physical examination must be performed and documented in the medical record prior to any surgical/invasive procedure.
- b) When the History and Physical examination is completed within 30 days before the planned procedure, and before admission or registration, an update to the History and Physical must be entered into the medical record. The update to the History and Physical must occur within the 24 hours after admission or registration but prior to surgery or a procedure requiring anesthesia services. A patient who has an History and Physical completed at the time of admission or registration does not require an update to History and Physical prior to surgery or procedure requiring anesthesia services.
- c) Documentation prior to interventions should follow nationally recognized guidelines and standards of practice for assessment of specific types of patients prior to specific outpatient surgeries and procedures, including adherence to relevant state and local health and safety laws.

5. Minimally Invasive Procedures, including those listed in Section 2.n.1c, excluding liver biopsy, will require an Outpatient Assessment, if an H+P is not available. The outpatient assessment will include at minimum:

- a) Chief complaint and history of present illness,
- b) Past medical history of disease and injury,
- c) Current medications (including over the counter and herbal),
- d) Drug allergies,
- e) Physical exam (including and weight and current vital sings pertinent to body systems for procedure

- f) Reports of diagnostic test results pertain to procedure
- g) Pre-operative Diagnosis pertaining to procedure
- h) Post-operative Diagnosis pertaining to procedure
- i) Reason for admission/procedure including treatment plan and planned interventions and procedures.

6. In addition to the demographic information required by Section 2.I of these Rules, a comprehensive H&P shall contain the following information:

- a) Chief complaint and history of present illness,
- b) Past medical history of disease and injury,
- c) Current medications (including over the counter and herbal),
- d) Allergies (food, drug, environmental),
- e) Past family, social, and personal history,
- f) Review of systems,
- g) Physical exam (including height and weight and current vital signs),
- h) Assessment of health status and health care needs of the patient,
- i) Reports of diagnostic test results including clinical laboratory services and consultative finding,
- j) Diagnosis including acuteness and severity of condition and
- k) Reason for admission/procedure including treatment plan and planned interventions and procedures.

7. Updates to History and Physical Examination. The update to the History and Physical must include, at a minimum:

- a) Review of the original History and Physical,
- b) Examination of the patient and
- c) Either confirmation of no changes, or documentation of such changes

8. History and Physical - Cancellations, Delays, and Emergency Situations.

When an H&P is not recorded in the medical record prior to a surgical or invasive procedure, the surgical or invasive procedure will be canceled or delayed until a complete H&P is recorded in the medical record, unless the attending Physician states in writing that an emergency situation exists. Informed consent is still required regardless of emergency.

In an emergency situation, when there is no time to record either a complete or an abbreviated H&P, the attending Physician will document immediately prior to the procedure, at a minimum, an assessment of the patient's heart rate, respiratory rate, and blood pressure. Immediately following the emergency procedure, the attending Physician shall complete and document an appropriate H&P.

9. Informed Consent. Informed consent is required for surgery and for special diagnostic or therapeutic procedures including blood transfusion in accordance with Hospital's Policy, "Informed Consent for Surgical or Invasive Procedures," as may be amended from time to time, except in certain medical emergencies as defined in the Policy.

10. **Pre-Operative/High Risk Procedure Reports.** The attending Physician or designee shall document a provisional diagnosis in the patient's medical record before an operative or high-risk procedure is performed.

11. **Operative Report.** An Operative Report for both inpatients and outpatients shall be documented and authenticated or dictated upon completion of any operative or other high-risk procedure and before the patient is transferred to the next level of care. If a complete Operative report is not available in the electronic medical record, such as in the case of dictation, before the transfer to the next level of care a Brief Operative Note must be documented immediately after the procedure. The full operative report shall be documented and authenticated. The operative report shall contain the following information:

- a) Date and time Name(s) of the Practitioner(s) who performed the procedure and their assistant(s),
- c) Name of the procedure performed,
- d) Type of anesthesia,
- e) Description of the procedure,
- f) Findings of the procedure,
- g) Estimated blood loss,
- h) Specimen(s) removed, if any,
- i) Per-operative and post-operative diagnosis,
- j) Vital signs and level of consciousness,
- k) List of any medications, including intravenous fluids and any administered blood, blood products, or blood components,
- l) Details of any unanticipated events or complications (including blood transfusion reactions) and the management of those events,
- m) Description of the specific significant surgical tasks that were conducted by a Practitioner other than the primary surgeon/Practitioner (significant surgical procedures include: opening and closing, harvesting grafts, dissecting tissue, removing tissue, and
- n) Prosthetic devices, grafts, tissues, transplants or devices implanted, if any.

12. **The brief operative note shall contain the following information:**

- a) Name(s) of the Practitioner(s) who performed the procedure and their assistant(s),
- b) Name of the procedure performed,
- c) Anesthesia delivered,
- d) Description of the procedure,
- f) Findings of the procedure,
- g) Estimated blood loss,
- h) Specimen(s) removed, if any,
- i) Pre-operative and post-operative diagnosis,
- j) Details of any unanticipated events or complications (including blood transfusion reactions) and the management of those events, and
- m) Prosthetic devices, grafts, tissues, transplants or devices implanted, if any.

o. **Anesthesia Care Record:**

1. **Pre-anesthesia Evaluation.** Except in cases of emergency, a pre-anesthesia evaluation shall be recorded prior to the patient's transfer to the operating area and before any pre-operative medication has been administered. All patients scheduled for surgery shall be examined pre-operatively by an individual, qualified, and privileged to administer anesthesia/sedation, within 48 hours prior to inpatient or outpatient surgery or procedure requiring anesthesia services. (Delivery of the first dose of medications for the purpose of inducing anesthesia marks the end of the 48-hour time frame).

2. **Pre-anesthesia evaluation shall include:**
 - a) Review of the medical history,
 - b) Interview and examination of the patient,
 - c) Documented airway assessment,
 - d) Anesthesia risk assessment, and
 - e) An anesthesia, drug and allergy history.

3. **Intra-operative Anesthesia Record.** There must be an intraoperative anesthesia record or report for each patient who receives general, regional or monitored anesthesia. The anesthetic record shall indicate the state of consciousness of the patient on arrival in the operating room and shall include all events occurring during the administration of the anesthetic.

4. **Post-Anesthesia Evaluation.** A post-anesthesia evaluation shall be completed and documented by an individual qualified and credentialed to administer anesthesia no later than forty-eight (48) hours after surgery or a procedure requiring anesthesia services. The calculation of the forty-eight (48) hour timeframe begins at the point the patient is moved into the designated recovery area. The elements of an adequate post-anesthesia evaluation should be clearly documented and conform to current standards of anesthesia care, including:
 - a) Respiratory function, including respiratory rate, airway patency, and oxygen saturation,
 - b) Cardiovascular function, including pulse rate and blood pressure,
 - c) Mental status,
 - d) Temperature,
 - e) Pain,
 - f) Nausea and vomiting; and,
 - g) Postoperative hydration.

5. **Discharge from Post Anesthesia Care Unit.** An anesthesiologist or CRNA shall be responsible for discharging patients from the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). Whenever anesthesia services and post anesthesia care are provided outside the operating room, the level of care must be comparable to the care provided in the operating room suite. Any patient who has received anesthesia, other than local anesthesia, shall be examined before discharge unless they meet established criteria for discharge ("discharge by criteria"). The examination, when required, shall be performed by an anesthesiologist or CRNA. The anesthesiologist or CRNA shall ensure that the patient is given adequate post-anesthesia recovery instructions and shall provide the patient or responsible party with a contact number for post-operative problems

or questions which may arise after the patient has been discharged. The patient shall be discharged from the Hospital in the company of a responsible adult unless exempted by the Practitioner who perform the surgical procedure. Such exemption must be noted in the medical record.

- p. **Consultation Reports.** Except in emergency situations, consultations with an appropriate and qualified member of the Medical Staff may be obtained. The patient's attending Practitioner has the responsibility for requesting consultation.
1. **Consulting Responsibility.** Any Practitioner with Hospital clinical privileges may be called for consultation within the Practitioner's area of expertise.
 2. **Required Consultations.** Appropriate care, treatment and services include the proper and timely use of consultations. Judgments as to the serious nature of the patient's illness, and any doubt as to diagnosis and treatment, are the responsibility of the Practitioner responsible for care of the patient. Consultation is recommended in the following instances:
 - a) When a patient is not a good risk for surgery or treatment,
 - b) Where the diagnosis is obscure after ordinary diagnostic procedures have been completed,
 - c) Where there is doubt as to the choice of therapeutic measures to be utilized,
 - d) In unusually complicated situations where specific skill of other Practitioners may be needed, or
 - e) When requested by the patient or their family.
 3. **The Attending Practitioner** is primarily responsible for requesting consultation when indicated and for calling in a qualified consultant. The Attending Practitioner, or representative, shall arrange the consultation and specify the level of involvement of the consultant. Direct communication between the Attending Practitioner and consultant is recommended for all consultations in order to assure proper coordination of care.

All consultation reports must be included in the medical record. The report shall include the opinions and conclusions reached by the consulting Practitioner, and if relevant, documentation of an examination of the patient and a review of the patient's medical record. In general, consultative reports should be completed and available in the medical record within twenty-four (24) hours of the request. Consultation documentation requirements are contained in Hospital Policy 4007b.

- q. **Inpatient Progress Notes.** Progress Notes shall be recorded at the time of observation and shall justify the continued need for hospitalization, support the diagnosis, describe patient progress, and the patient's response to medication and services. The patient's clinical issues shall be clearly identified in the Progress Notes and correlated with specific orders as well as results of tests and treatment. Progress notes shall be written at least daily, except for patients who are clinically stable and who have been discharged from inpatient status, e.g., patients pending long-term care placement. For those patients, a progress note shall be written at least once per week or whenever there are any changes in clinical status. A Progress Note is not required on the day of

discharge if the Discharge Summary has been completed or updated on the day of discharge. See, the Hospital's Provider Documentation Requirement for the Medical Record 4007b policy.

- r. **Emergency Department Records.** The medical record of a patient who receives care, treatment, and services in the Emergency Department shall contain the following information:
 - 1. The time and means of arrival,
 - 2. Indication that the patient left against medical advice (per appropriate Hospital Policy), if applicable,
 - 3. Conclusions reached at the termination of care, treatment, and services, including the patient's final disposition, condition, and instructions given for follow-up care, treatment, and services, and
 - 4. Documentation that information was made available to the practitioner or medical organization providing follow-up care, treatment, or services.
- s. **Treatment Plan for Patients Requiring Psychiatric or Substance Abuse Services.** For patients requiring psychiatric or substance-abuse services either at the time of admission or during admission, the medical record shall include a written treatment plan that clearly identifies and documents how these issues will be addressed during admission or following discharge.
- t. **Change of Attending Physician.** The attending Physician shall be responsible for the management of the patient's general medical care and treatment while in the Hospital, and for the prompt completeness and accuracy of the medical record. The electronic medical record shall be updated when these responsibilities are transferred to another Medical Staff member. Appropriate continuity of care guidelines when hand-offs occur shall be established by the specific Attending Service line.
- u. **Discharge Order.** Patients shall be discharged only upon the order of the attending Physician or another Practitioner on the Medical Staff acting as their representative. A discharge order entered into the electronic medical record is required for all patients, with the exception of patients choosing to leave against medical advice.
- v. **Discharge Summary.** A discharge summary shall be completed, authenticated, dated and timed for all patients.

The discharge summary shall include, but is not limited to the reason for hospitalization, a relevant summary of the care received, significant clinical findings (e.g. physical exam, labs, imaging, etc.), any procedures performed, results from any pathology samples, any complications, the outcome of hospitalization, disposition of the case, final diagnosis, and provisions for follow up care (e.g. medication changes, diet and activity restrictions, etc). For patients being discharged from inpatient status and observation status see recommended additional components of the Discharge Summary found in Hospital Policy, 4007b.

Discharge summaries shall be completed by the attending Physician or designated representative and included in the medical record promptly, but in any event must be submitted as final within fifteen (15) days of discharge, in order to provide information to other caregivers and facilitate the patient's continuity of care.

- w. **Queries.** A query from the Medical Records Office or affiliated coding specialists will be sent to the Practitioner requesting clarification if the documentation in the medical record is not clear or if the discharge summary is not clear regarding the final diagnoses. The Practitioner shall submit the appropriate electronic response clarifying the issue within the medical record as soon as possible.
- x. **Autopsy and Post-mortem protocol.** See, the Hospital's Post-Mortem Policy: Care, Release, Autopsy and Medical Examiner (ME) Policy.
- y. **Ambulatory Care.** For patients receiving ambulatory care services, the medical record shall contain a summary list of significant diagnoses, procedures, drug allergies, and medications, as outlined in this paragraph. Clinical documentation should be completed on the day of the patient visit but no later than seventy-two (72) hours following the visit. This documentation shall be the joint responsibility of the Practitioners and the Hospital as applicable. It should include:
 - 1. identification data, including the patient's name, legal sex, address, date of birth, marital status, ethnic group, race, religious preference, and name of authorized representative,
 - 2. date and time of arrival,
 - 3. date and time of departure,
 - 4. service date,
 - 5. known significant medical diagnoses and conditions,
 - 6. known significant operative and invasive procedures,
 - 7. known adverse and allergic drug reactions,
 - 8. known long-term medications, including current medications, over the counter drugs, and herbal preparations,
 - 9. principal and other diagnoses,
 - 10. treatment plan,
 - 11. procedures performed,
 - 12. expected source of payment,
 - 13. disposition of patient.
 - 14. Medical history, including Immunization record, screening tests, allergy record, nutritional evaluation, neonatal history for pediatric patients,
 - 15. Physical examination report,
 - 16. consultation reports,
 - 17. clinical notes, including dates and times of visits,
 - 18. treatments and instructions, including notations of prescriptions written, diet instructions, if applicable, self-care instructions,
 - 19. reports of all laboratory test performed,

- 20. reports of all X-Ray examinations performed,
 - 21. written record of preoperative and postoperative instructions,
 - 22. operative report on outpatient surgery, including preoperative and postoperative diagnosis, description of findings, techniques used, and tissue removed or altered, if appropriate,
 - 23. anesthesia record, including preoperative diagnosis, if anesthesia is administered,
 - 24. pathology report, if tissue or body fluid was removed,
 - 25. clinical data from other providers.
 - 26. referral information from other agencies
 - 27. all consent forms, and
 - 28. any other documentation as required by insurance or regulatory bodies.
- z. **Outpatient Therapeutic and Diagnostic Services.** Orders for outpatient therapeutic and diagnostic services are the responsibility of the ordering Practitioner. All orders for outpatient services shall include adequate clinical information to verify the purpose and appropriateness of the requested service. Confirmed diagnoses, symptoms, or the correct ICD code must be entered on the requisition order.
- aa. **Delinquent Medical Records.**
1. **General Requirements.** It is the responsibility of all Practitioners involved in the care of a hospitalized patient to prepare and complete medical records in a timely fashion in accordance with the specific provisions of these rules and regulations and other relevant policies of the Hospital. Even if the patient care and/or discharge occurred while another Practitioner was covering, the ultimate responsibility for medical record completion remains with the attending or supervising Physician. If the attending Physician is not available, then it is escalated to the supervising physician, i.e., the Service Leader or Chief.
 2. **Notification.** Practitioners who have not completed their medical records thirty (30) days post-discharge/registration of outpatients will be notified by Health Information Staff. Failure to complete medical records may result in suspension of the Practitioner's privileges to perform non-emergent procedures, admit new patients to the Hospital, schedule any new procedures/surgeries to be performed in the Hospital, nor submit orders for outpatient procedures and testing. Such suspension shall remain in effect until all delinquent medical records are completed. If privileges are suspended the Practitioner is responsible for arranging coverage for new patients presenting to the Hospital requiring admission as well as arranging coverage for patients who require outpatient procedures or testing. Written notice shall be given to the Practitioner seven (7) days prior to suspension.

In the event of a suspension, the President of the Medical Staff, Vice President of the Medical Staff, Department Chiefs, nursing administration, Hospital administration, and other key Departments shall be notified via email. If the Practitioner is unable or fails to appropriately transfer care of their patient, the Vice President of Medical Affairs, will assign the care of such patients to a Practitioner who has appropriate clinical privilege.

Three (3) such suspensions of privileges within any twelve (12) month period shall be

reviewed by the Medical Staff Executive Committee to consider further corrective action in accordance with the Medical Staff Bylaws.

SECTION 3. General Conduct of Care

a. Orders

1. **General Requirements.** All orders for treatment, diagnostic tests, admission, or discharge shall be in writing or entered into the electronic medical record and shall be authenticated, dated, timed, and signed in a timely manner by the prescribing Practitioner. Orders shall be clearly written, legible and complete. Allied Health Staff may enter orders only to the extent, if any, allowed by their professional license/certification. Illegible orders or orders which nursing has difficulty interpreting shall not be carried out until rewritten or understood by nursing.
2. **Verbal or Telephone Orders.** Verbal or telephone orders will only be accepted from Physicians or Allied Health Staff functioning within the scope of their licensure. Verbal or telephone orders are not encouraged and should be used infrequently. A verbal or telephone order may be given to Hospital staff as follows: (1) RNs and LPNs may receive verbal or telephone orders. (2) Respiratory therapists, physical, occupational and speech therapists, x-ray technologists, pharmacists, certified hyperbaric technologists, certified wound specialists, and registered dietitians may receive telephone orders in the field of their expertise and the specialty in which they are licensed or certified and who are authorized by law to receive and record verbal orders.

Authentication of a verbal or telephone order shall occur within forty-eight (48) hours after the time the order is given unless the read-back and verify process is used. The individual receiving a verbal or telephone order shall sign and record in writing or in the electronic medical record the date and time of the verbal or telephone order and the name of the ordering Practitioner.

A read-back and verify process is allowed and shall require that the individual receiving the order immediately read back the order to the ordering Practitioner, who shall immediately verify that the read-back order is correct. The individual receiving the verbal or telephone order shall record in writing or in the electronic medical record that the order was read back and verified. If the read-back and verify process is followed, the order shall be authenticated within thirty days (30) after the date of the patient's discharge.

Texted orders communicated through secure messaging systems are subject to the Hospital's secure texting policy.

3. **Advance Directives.** When indicated, orders in compliance with a patient's advance directives shall be documented in the Medical Record in accordance with Hospital policy. A copy of the patient's advance directive shall be included in the medical record.

4. **Patient Restraint.** Restraint or seclusion may only be imposed to ensure the immediate physical safety of the patient, a staff member, or others and must be discontinued at the earliest possible time. All orders requiring patient restraint or seclusion shall conform to the Hospital's Policy on Patient Restraint or Seclusion.
5. **Formulary.** All drugs and medications administered to patients shall be those listed in the latest formulary as approved by the Covenant Health and Therapeutics Committee and the Medical Executive Committee.
 - a) Medications and intravenous fluid orders will be performed in accordance with pharmacy policy.
 - b) As smoking is prohibited on Hospital property, alternative forms of nicotine delivery should be offered to the patient, if medically indicated.

b. **On-Call Requirements**

1. **On-Call Responsibilities.** All Active Staff members shall be familiar with and shall comply with the requirements of the Hospital's EMTALA policy.
2. **Conflicting Obligations While On-Call.** Notwithstanding an on-call Physician's obligation to respond when on-call, the on-call Physician may perform elective surgery or other patient care services at the Hospital while on call, and may be on-call at another hospital, provided the on-call Physician notifies and receives approval of their Service Chief.
3. In an under-represented specialty, a Physician may have reduced on-call responsibilities as determined by the Medical Executive Committee. The definition of an under-represented specialty is any specialty or sub-specialty with a total number of two or fewer Physicians. While it is understood that a Physician in an under-represented specialty may have increased on-call responsibilities, no Physician shall be required to have more than ten (10) call days per month, unless there is an agreement with the Physician and Chief of Service line.
4. See also, Section 1.h of these rules: Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act ("EMTALA").

SECTION 4. General Rules Regarding Surgical Care

- a. Except in emergencies, a H& P must be in the patient's medical record prior to any surgical procedure. The Practitioner shall complete a pre-procedure evaluation prior to induction of anesthesia and start of surgery.
- b. Written, signed, informed, surgical consent shall be obtained prior to the operative procedure except in those situations wherein the patient's life is in jeopardy and suitable signatures cannot be obtained due to the condition of the patient. In emergencies involving a minor or unconscious patient, when consent for surgery cannot be immediately obtained from parent, guardian, or next of kin, these circumstances shall be fully explained on the patient's medical

record. If time permits, a confirmatory consultation with another physician in such instances is desirable before the emergency operative procedure is undertaken.

- c. Compliance with Universal Protocol for preventing wrong-site, wrong-patient, wrong- procedure surgery is mandatory.
- d. The Anesthesiologist shall maintain a complete anesthesia record to include evidence of pre-anesthetic evaluation and documentation of admission and discharge status of the postoperative patient when in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit.
- e. The operating Physician will decide on the necessity of a first assistant. First assistants will receive their privileges through the usual credentialing process.
- f. All tissues removed during surgery, with the exception of those listed in Exhibit 1, shall be sent to the Pathology Department. The pathologist shall make such examination, as they may consider necessary to arrive at a tissue diagnosis. The pathologist's authenticated report shall be made part of the patient's medical record.
- g. Surgical scheduling shall be in accordance with the rules of the Hospital. Scheduling shall be a joint responsibility of the Chief of the Department of Surgery and the Director of Perioperative Services and the Perioperative Executive Committee. A list of those Practitioners who have surgical privileges and the delineation of such privileges shall be made available to the Director of Perioperative Services and shall be maintained by the Director. Any violation of privileges outlined on this list shall be reported immediately to the Hospital President and the Chief of the Department of Surgery.
- h. Surgeons must be in the operating room and ready to begin operations at the time scheduled.
- i. All Practitioners utilizing the services of the surgical suite shall conform to the policies, rules and regulations that are formulated by the Surgical Governance Council and approved by the Medical Executive Committee and Board of Trustees.

SECTION 5. General Rules Regarding the Oral Maxillofacial/Dental Service

- a. Oral maxillofacial surgeons and dentists shall be organized as a Service under the Department of Surgery.
- b. Oral maxillofacial surgeons and dentists must be qualified, legally and professionally as provided by these Bylaws for members of the Medical Staff.
- c. Delineation of privileges of dentists shall be provided for in the same manner as for other Departments and Services.
- d. The dentist shall admit patients for dental service to the Surgical Department, Oral Maxillofacial/Dental Service.

- e. There must be a staff physician in attendance that is responsible for the medical care of the patient throughout the hospital stay. A pre-procedure evaluation shall be done and recorded by a member of the Medical Staff before surgery is performed. Rules regarding pre-operative H&P are detailed above in the Medical Records section of these Rules.
- f. Patients admitted by a dentist other than an oral surgeon shall receive the same careful medical assessment as those admitted by other Physicians. In this regard, the care of the patient shall be the dual responsibility of the attending dentist and a staff physician or oral surgeon, each limited to their respective professional specialty and privileges.
- g. The requirements in paragraphs e. and f. are waived in the case of individual oral surgeons whose training specifically qualifies them to perform admission H&P, and whose credentials meet the requirements of the Oral Maxillofacial Service as approved by the Chief of Surgery.

SECTION 6. General Rules Regarding Emergency Services

- a. The Hospital shall always staff the emergency area with physicians. One physician shall be designated Chief of the Emergency Department. Qualifications for appointment to the Emergency Department shall be in conformity with other provisions of these Bylaws. It will be the duty of such physicians to render initial care to patients seeking emergency care.
- b. In addition, the Chief of each Department/Service shall supply a roster of on-call physicians who will be available to cover the emergency care in their field of specialty. Such on-call physicians shall be available for consultation with the Emergency Department physician and shall be in attendance to render emergency care if circumstances warrant. Specialty consultation must be available within a reasonable time frame. Initial consultation by telephone is acceptable. When a physician is on-call, they may not refer unstable emergency cases to their office for examination and treatment.
- c. The physicians in the Emergency Department will not serve as the attending physician after a patient has been admitted to the Hospital.
- d. An appropriate medical record shall be kept for every patient receiving emergency service and be incorporated in the patient's hospital record in accordance with the Medical Records rules, set forth in these Rules.
- e. Treatment rendered in the Emergency Department shall conform to the policies, rules and regulations concerning emergency care as formulated by the Emergency Department and approved by the Medical Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees. Such policies, rules and regulations shall be posted in the Emergency Department at all times.

SECTION 7. General Rules Regarding Critical Care Unit

All physicians utilizing the services of the Critical Care Unit shall conform to the policies, rules and regulations formulated by the Governance Council and approved by the Medical Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 8. Mass Casualties

Rules and regulations regarding the care of mass casualties at the time of a major disaster are set forth in the Hospital's current disaster plan.

SECTION 9. Responsibilities for Residents and Medical Students

Note: For the purpose of this section, a sponsoring physician is a physician willing to assist in the training of a resident or student. On occasion, the sponsoring physician could also include those physicians who cross-cover in the same practice.

a. Resident Responsibilities:

1. Any Active member of the Medical Staff agreeing to sponsor a resident must notify Administration at least 30 days prior to the resident's arrival. The resident must be currently enrolled in an accredited U.S. residency program and provide the Hospital with proof of medical liability insurance.
2. Subject to patient consent, residents may interact with Hospital patients, while under the direction of Active members of the Medical Staff who may delegate to residents some defined portion of that medical care responsibility.
3. Recommended responsibilities of the supervising physician and of the resident are listed below:
 - a) The resident may evaluate the supervising physician's patients (or appropriate cross-coverage) in the Emergency Department provided the sponsoring physician or service also evaluates the patient and at minimum addends the Emergency Department record prior to admission to the Hospital or discharge from the Emergency Department.
 - b) For those patients admitted to the Hospital, the sponsoring physician shall evaluate the patient in person and be in a position to confirm the findings of the resident and discuss the care plan. A sponsoring physician should at minimum addend the admission note indicating agreement with the resident's plan.
 - c) The sponsoring physician or service confirms the subjective and objective findings of the resident, reviews the differential diagnosis, and discusses patient care management with the resident.
 - d) At least on a daily basis (more often as the needs of the individual patient may dictate), the resident and the sponsoring physician will review progress of the patient, make the necessary modification in the care plan, and agree on the type and scope of documentation for the medical record.
 - e) A resident may enter executable orders.
 - f) When a medical patient develops a condition that the resident feels is potentially critical

for that patient, the resident will contact the sponsoring physician or service and report these developments. The resident may identify the need for the sponsoring physician to see the patient at an agreed upon time to assist in the evaluation and treatment of such a patient.

- g) As the level of skill and knowledge increases for individual residents, sponsoring physicians may delegate increasing levels of responsibilities and allow increasing levels of participation in patient care.
- h) At the time of discharge, the sponsoring physician or service may delegate some of the discharge planning to the resident and should review any discharge documents generated by the resident and must sign any attestation statements required.
- i) The sponsoring physician or service should insure the completeness of the medical record.
- j) The principal documents of each hospital stay that are prepared by the residents, (the history and physical and the discharge summary, for example), must be reviewed for completeness by the sponsoring physician or service.
- k) These documents are to be countersigned by the sponsoring physician or their coverage. The sponsoring physician remains responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the medical record generated by the resident.

b. **Medical Student/Physician Associate Student Responsibilities**

1. Any Active member of the Medical Staff agreeing to sponsor a student, either a medical student, nurse practitioner student, or a physician associate student, must notify Administration at least 30 days prior to the student's arrival. The student must be currently enrolled in an accredited U.S. medical school. The student must also provide the Hospital with proof of medical liability insurance.
2. Subject to the patient's permission, students may interact with Hospital patients, and under the direct supervision of Active members of the Medical Staff at all times.
3. Recommended responsibilities of the sponsoring physician and of the student are listed below:
 - a) For those patients admitted to the Hospital, the student may enter a H&P or consultation into the written record for educational purposes only. The sponsoring physician must still dictate an authenticated history and physical examination or consultation.
 - b) The student may write orders which the physician has approved, and the orders can be acted upon pending co-signature.
 - c) The student may assist the sponsoring physician or service in the emergency room or in the operating room. The sponsoring physician must be physically present in the emergency room or in the operating room at all times. The student may first assist only on cases previously approved by the Chief of Surgery. It is the sponsoring physician's responsibility to obtain the necessary approval. Approval from the President or their designee, with input from the Department Chief, must be obtained for student involvement in any invasive procedure. It is the sponsoring physician's responsibility to

- obtain the necessary approval from the President or their designee.
- d) The student may round, with the patients' consent, with the sponsoring physician or service on hospitalized patients.

SECTION 10. Responsibility for Non-Covered Patients in Event Practitioner Loses Privileges

In the event a Practitioner loses privileges, the Department Chief or the President of the Medical Staff shall promptly assign the member's patients to another Service member. Whenever feasible, the wishes of the patient in the choice of a substitute member will be considered.



Origination 03/2024
Last 03/2024
Approved
Effective 03/2024
Last Revised 03/2024
Next Review 03/2026

Owner Stephanie Williams:
LABORATORY OPERATIONS
MANAGER/
OUTREACH COORDINATOR
Policy Area LAB - PC
Applicability St. Joseph Hospital Bangor

Surgically Removed Specimens NOT REQUIRED for Submission to Pathology

COPY

PURPOSE:

This procedure is intended to serve as a guide for surgically removed specimens not required for submission to Pathology

POLICY:

If the physician desires further documentation or evaluation of any of the above specimens, the laboratory will accept them and provide gross documentation and will do microscopic examination if requested and if feasible for the type of specimen submitted.

The following specimens may be exempt from laboratory examination:

- Amputated limbs due to trauma, non-union, and/or dysfunction
- Aspirated and/or impacted food or foreign material.
- Blood clot
- Bullets, missiles and weapons; removal must be recorded in the medical record.
- Bunions/claw toes/hammertoes.
- Cataract lenses, iris, and muscle fragments.
- Donor organs for transplantation.
- Ear ossicles (staples, incus, malleus)

- Extra digits.
- Eyelid tissue removed for cosmetic surgery only.
- Fat removed by liposuction.
- Foreign objects/foreign body.
- Grossly unremarkable foreskin from circumcision of a newborn.
- Intrauterine devices.
- Intravascular catheters
- Medical devices not contributing to patient illness, injury or death (e.g. gastrostomy tubes, stents, sutures).
- Meniscus.
- Mucosa, bone, and cartilage removed during plastic surgical procedures for non-neoplastic disease (ex. septoplasty and uvulectomy).
- Nasal septal cartilage and/or bone.
- Normal rib removed for surgical access (provided no history of malignancy). Normal skin from plastic surgery procedures.
- Oral hardware
- Orthopedic hardware.
- Pacemakers and other medical devices.
- Placentas without medical indications.
- Products of conception/fetus when family or clinician does not request an exam and there is no suspicion of ectopic pregnancy or anomalies
- Surgical specimens obtained from an arthroscopic knee procedure where documentation exists of the pathologic changes confirming the indications for the procedure and the presence of disease, (ex. permanent photographic or video record).
- Teeth, removal must be recorded in the medical record.
- Tissue from acromio-clavicular joint surgery.
- Tissue from rotator cuff repair.
- Tissue removed from joint replacement surgery, for osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and reconstructive purposes.
- Tissue such as ligamentum flavum, intervertebral disc fragments, and bone removed during routine spinal surgery
- Toenails and fingernails that are grossly unremarkable.
- Traumatically amputated digits.
- Vaginal mucosa for repair.
- Varicose veins

REFERENCES:

<https://dahlchase.host4kb.com/article/AA-00275/33/Dahl-Chase-Directory-of-Services/Surgical->

Approval Signatures

| Step Description | Approver | Date |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Director Diagnostic Services | Billie Jo Sickler: DIRECTOR LABORATORY SERVICES | 03/2024 |
| Director Diagnostic Services | Stephanie Williams: LABORATORY OPERATIONS MANAGER/OUTREACH COORDINATOR | 03/202 |

Applicability

Bangor St. Joseph Hospital

COPY

Status **Active**

PolicyStat ID 16832646



st. joseph healthcare
St. Joseph Hospital

Origination 03/2024
Last Approved 11/2024
Effective 11/2024
Last Revised 03/2024
Next Review 11/2026

Owner Pamela Baker:
OPERATIONS
MANAGER
Policy Area Lab Services
Applicability St. Joseph
Hospital Bangor
References DCPA

Gross Only Specimens

PURPOSE:

This procedure is intended to serve as a guide for specimens that are considered Gross only specimens.

POLICY:

- A. Gross Only examination refers to the macroscopic examination of specific tissues, for which a laboratory report is generated, according to written institutional policy. The examination may include dissection but not submission of tissue for microscopic examination.
- B. A gross exam will only be performed at the discretion of the clinician. Gross-only exam must be explicitly documented on the requisition by the clinician.
- C. Dahl-Chase Pathology Associates reserves the right to histologically exam any specimen submitted for gross only exam. The pathologist may deem it necessary to microscopically exam any specimen to achieve an accurate diagnosis.

PROCEDURE:

The following specimens are considered gross only specimens in our laboratory. The gross only examination will include macroscopic examination, description, and diagnosis of the material received.

- A. Accessory bones and digits.
- B. Acromio-clavicular joint.
- C. Arthroscopic shavings.
- D. Bones for degenerative arthritis/OA

- E. Breast implant.
- F. Bullets.
- G. Bunions/claw toes/hammer toes.
- H. Calculi, usually submitted for chemical analysis unless stated otherwise.
 - I. Common bile duct stone.
- J. Foreign objects/foreign body.
- K. Gallstones
- L. Lenses.
- M. Meniscus.
- N. Nasal septum.
- O. Orthopedic hardware.
- P. Ossicles of the ear.
- Q. Panniculectomy tissue.
- R. Parasites.
- S. Prosthetic material (metallic or synthetic).
- T. Rib- incidental removal.
- U. Scar tissue from plastic surgery.
- V. Skin- cosmetic tissue.
- W. Teeth.
- X. Tissue from rotator cuff repair.
- Y. Toenail and fingernails.
- Z. Tonsils and adenoids 17 and under.
- AA. Traumatic amputation specimens (extremity, fingers, toes) and debridement tissue from trauma.
- AB. Uvula from sleep apnea. AC. Vaginal mucosa for repair. AD. Varicose veins.
- AE. Any structure, tissue or material not specifically mentioned above, that in the opinion of a board certified pathologist does not require microscopic examination.

REFERENCES:

<https://dahlchase.host4kb.com/article/AA-00276/33/Dahl-Chase-Directory-of-Services/Surgical-Pathology-Testing/Gross-Only-Specimens.html>

Approval Signatures

| Step Description | Approver | Date |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| MEC Approval | Sandra Levesque: MANAGER MEDICAL STAFF OFFICE | 11/2024 |
| Director Diagnostic Services | Stephanie Williams: LABORATORY OPERATIONS MANAGER/OUTREACH COORDINATOR | 10/2024 |
| Director Diagnostic Services | Billie Jo Sickler: DIRECTOR LABORATORY SERVICES | 10/2024 |

Applicability

Bangor St. Joseph Hospital

COPY

Exhibit 2

Complaint Resolution Process Report

Practitioner ID #: _____ Date Allegation/Concern was identified:
Date Department Chief was notified:
Date CRP Meeting was held:
Participants:

Summary of Meeting:

Finding: Concern/Allegation Substantiated
 Lack of Evidence to either Support or Reject the Concern/Allegation
 Concern/Allegation Unsubstantiated

Recommendation:

Department Chief
Date: _____

Medical Executive Committee Review

The Medical Executive Committee reviewed this CRP Report on _____ and:
 approved the resolution of the concern/allegation;
 decided to pursue further review and action through the corrective action process;
or
 rejected the CRP resolution of this concern/allegation (Document reason below)

Comments:

Exhibit 2

Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services

Seventh Edition

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services, *Seventh Edition*

This seventh edition of the *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services* was developed by the Committee on Doctrine of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and approved by the USCCB at its November 2025 Plenary Assembly. This edition of the *Directives* replaces all previous editions, is recommended for implementation by the diocesan bishop, and is authorized for publication by the undersigned.

Rev. Michael J. K. Fuller
General Secretary, USCCB

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Digital Edition, November 2025

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Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services, *Seventh Edition*

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Preamble

Health care in the United States is marked by extraordinary change. Not only is there continuing change in clinical practice due to technological advances, but the health care system in the United States is being challenged by both institutional and social factors as well. At the same time, there are a number of developments within the Catholic Church affecting the ecclesial mission of health care. Among these are significant changes in religious orders and congregations, the increased involvement of lay men and women, a heightened awareness of the Church's social role in the world, and developments in moral theology since the Second Vatican Council. A contemporary understanding of the Catholic health care ministry must take into account the new challenges presented by transitions both in the Church and in American society.

Throughout the centuries, with the aid of other sciences, a body of moral principles has emerged that expresses the Church's teaching on medical and moral matters and has proven to be pertinent and applicable to the ever-changing circumstances of health care and its delivery. In response to today's challenges, these same moral principles of Catholic teaching provide the rationale and direction for this revision of the *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services*.

These Directives presuppose our statement *Health and Health Care* published in 1981.¹ There we presented the theological principles that guide the Church's vision of health care, called for all Catholics to share in the healing mission of the Church, expressed our full commitment to the health care ministry, and offered encouragement to all those who are involved in it. Now, with American health care facing even more dramatic changes, we reaffirm the Church's commitment to health care ministry and the distinctive Catholic identity of the Church's institutional health care services.² The purpose of these *Ethical and Religious Directives* then is twofold: first, to reaffirm the ethical standards of behavior in health care that flow from the Church's teaching about the dignity of the human person; second, to provide authoritative guidance on certain moral issues that face Catholic health care today.

The *Ethical and Religious Directives* are concerned primarily with institutionally based Catholic health care services. They address the sponsors, trustees, administrators, chaplains, physicians, health care personnel, and patients or residents of these institutions and services. Since they express the Church's moral teaching, these Directives also will be helpful to Catholic professionals engaged in health care services in other settings. The moral teachings that we profess

¹ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Health and Health Care: A Pastoral Letter of the American Catholic Bishops* (1981), <https://www.usccb.org/resources/health-and-health-care-pastoral-letter-american-catholic-bishops-november-19-1981>.

² Health care services under Catholic auspices are carried out in a variety of institutional settings (e.g., hospitals, clinics, outpatient facilities, urgent care centers, hospices, nursing homes, and parishes). Depending on the context, these Directives will employ the terms "institution" and/or "services" in order to encompass the variety of settings in which Catholic health care is provided.

here flow principally from the natural law, understood in the light of the revelation Christ has entrusted to his Church. From this source the Church has derived its understanding of the nature of the human person, of human acts, and of the goals that shape human activity.

The Directives have been refined through an extensive process of consultation with bishops, theologians, sponsors, administrators, physicians, and other health care providers. While providing standards and guidance, the Directives do not cover in detail all of the complex issues that confront Catholic health care today. Moreover, the Directives will be reviewed periodically by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (formerly the National Conference of Catholic Bishops), in the light of authoritative church teaching, in order to address new insights from theological and medical research or new requirements of public policy.

The Directives begin with a general introduction that presents a theological basis for the Catholic health care ministry. Each of the six parts that follow is divided into two sections. The first section is in expository form; it serves as an introduction and provides the context in which concrete issues can be discussed from the perspective of the Catholic faith. The second section is in prescriptive form; the directives promote and protect the truths of the Catholic faith as those truths are brought to bear on concrete issues in health care.

General Introduction

The Church has always sought to embody our Savior's concern for the sick. The gospel accounts of Jesus' ministry draw special attention to his acts of healing: he cleansed a man with leprosy (Mt 8:1-4; Mk 1:40-42); he gave sight to two people who were blind (Mt 20:29-34; Mk 10:46-52); he enabled one who was mute to speak (Lk 11:14); he cured a woman who was hemorrhaging (Mt 9:20-22; Mk 5:25-34); and he brought a young girl back to life (Mt 9:18, 23-25; Mk 5:35-42). Indeed, the Gospels are replete with examples of how the Lord cured every kind of ailment and disease (Mt 9:35). In the account of Matthew, Jesus' mission fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: "He took away our infirmities and bore our diseases" (Mt 8:17; cf. Is 53:4).

Jesus' healing mission went further than caring only for physical affliction. He touched people at the deepest level of their existence; he sought their physical, mental, and spiritual healing (Jn 6:35, 11:25-27). He "came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly" (Jn 10:10). The mystery of Christ casts light on every facet of Catholic health care: to see Christian love as the animating principle of health care; to see healing and compassion as a continuation of Christ's mission; to see suffering as a participation in the redemptive power of Christ's passion, death, and resurrection; and to see death, transformed by the resurrection, as an opportunity for a final act of communion with Christ.

For the Christian, our encounter with suffering and death can take on a positive and distinctive meaning through the redemptive power of Jesus' suffering and death. As St. Paul says, we are "always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body" (2 Cor 4:10). This truth does not lessen the pain and fear, but gives confidence and grace for bearing suffering rather than being overwhelmed by it. Catholic health care ministry bears witness to the truth that, for those who are in Christ, suffering and death are the birth pangs of the new creation. "God himself will always be with them [as their God]. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, [for] the old order has passed away" (Rev 21:3-4).

In faithful imitation of Jesus Christ, the Church has served the sick, suffering, and dying in various ways throughout history. The zealous service of individuals and communities has provided shelter for the traveler; infirmaries for the sick; and homes for children, adults, and the elderly.³ In the United States, the many religious communities as well as dioceses that sponsor and staff this country's Catholic health care institutions and services have established an effective Catholic presence in health care. Modeling their efforts on the gospel parable of the Good Samaritan, these communities of women and men have exemplified authentic neighborliness to those in need (Lk 10:25-37). The Church seeks to ensure that the service offered in the past will be continued into the future.

While many religious communities continue their commitment to the health care ministry, lay Catholics increasingly have stepped forward to collaborate in this ministry. Inspired by the example of Christ and mandated by the Second Vatican Council, lay faithful are invited to a

³ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Health and Health Care*, p. 5.

broader and more intense field of ministries than in the past.⁴ By virtue of their Baptism, lay faithful are called to participate actively in the Church's life and mission.⁵ Their participation and leadership in the health care ministry, through new forms of sponsorship and governance of institutional Catholic health care, are essential for the Church to continue her ministry of healing and compassion. They are joined in the Church's health care mission by many men and women who are not Catholic.

Catholic health care expresses the healing ministry of Christ in a specific way within the local church. Here the diocesan bishop exercises responsibilities that are rooted in his office as pastor, teacher, and priest. As the center of unity in the diocese and coordinator of ministries in the local church, the diocesan bishop fosters the mission of Catholic health care in a way that promotes collaboration among health care leaders, providers, medical professionals, theologians, and other specialists. As pastor, the diocesan bishop is in a unique position to encourage the faithful to greater responsibility in the healing ministry of the Church. As teacher, the diocesan bishop ensures the moral and religious identity of the health care ministry in whatever setting it is carried out in the diocese. As priest, the diocesan bishop oversees the sacramental care of the sick. These responsibilities will require that Catholic health care providers and the diocesan bishop engage in ongoing communication on ethical and pastoral matters that require his attention.

In a time of new medical discoveries, rapid technological developments, and social change, what is new can either be an opportunity for genuine advancement in human culture, or it can lead to policies and actions that are contrary to the true dignity and vocation of the human person. In consultation with medical professionals, church leaders review these developments, judge them according to the principles of right reason and the ultimate standard of revealed truth, and offer authoritative teaching and guidance about the moral and pastoral responsibilities entailed by the Christian faith.⁶ While the Church cannot furnish a ready answer to every moral dilemma, there are many questions about which she provides normative guidance and direction. In the absence of a determination by the magisterium, but never contrary to church teaching, the guidance of approved authors can offer appropriate guidance for ethical decision making.

Created in God's image and likeness, the human family shares in the dominion that Christ manifested in his healing ministry. This sharing involves a stewardship over all material creation

⁴ Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (1965), no. 1, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651118_apostolicam-actuositatem_en.html.

⁵ Pope John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici*, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World (1988), no. 29, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_30121988_christifideles-laici.html.

⁶ As examples, see Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Declaration on Procured Abortion* (1974), https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19741118_declaration-abortion_en.html; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Declaration on Euthanasia* (1980), https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19800505_euthanasia_en.html; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum Vitae*, Instruction on Respect for Human Life in Its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation (1987), https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19870222_respect-for-human-life_en.html.

(Gn 1:26) that should neither abuse nor squander nature's resources. Through science the human race comes to understand God's wonderful work; and through technology it must conserve, protect, and perfect nature in harmony with God's purposes. Health care professionals pursue a special vocation to share in carrying forth God's life-giving and healing work.

The dialogue between medical science and Christian faith has for its primary purpose the common good of all human persons. It presupposes that science and faith do not contradict each other. Both are grounded in respect for truth and freedom. As new knowledge and new technologies expand, each person must form a correct conscience based on the moral norms for proper health care.

PART ONE

The Social Responsibility of Catholic Health Care Services

Introduction

Their embrace of Christ’s healing mission has led Catholic health care services in the United States to become an integral part of the nation’s health care system. Today, this complex health care system confronts a range of economic, technological, social, and moral challenges. The response of Catholic health care institutions and services to these challenges is guided by normative principles that inform the Church’s healing ministry.

First, Catholic health care ministry is rooted in a commitment to promote and defend human dignity, an inherent and inviolable dignity that every person possesses as “inalienably grounded in his or her very being.”⁷ Human dignity is the foundation the Catholic Church’s concern to respect the sacredness of every human life from the moment of conception until death. The first right of the human person, the right to life, entails a right to the means for the proper development of life, such as adequate health care.⁸

Second, the biblical mandate to care for the poor requires us to express this in concrete action at all levels of Catholic health care. This mandate prompts us to work to ensure that our country’s health care delivery system provides adequate access to health care for those who are poor. In Catholic institutions, particular attention should be given to the health care needs of the poor, the uninsured, and the underinsured.⁹

Third, Catholic health care ministry seeks to contribute to the common good. The common good is realized when economic, political, and social conditions ensure protection for the fundamental rights of all individuals and enable all to fulfill their common purpose and reach their common goals.¹⁰

Fourth, Catholic health care ministry exercises responsible stewardship of available health care resources. A just health care system will be concerned both with promoting equity of care—

⁷ Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dignitas Infinita*, Declaration on Human Dignity (2024), no. 1, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_dof_doc_20240402_dignitas-infinita_en.html.

⁸ Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, Encyclical Letter on Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity, and Liberty (1963), no. 11, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Health and Health Care*, pp. 5, 17-18; *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993), no. 2211, <https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/P7T.HTM>.

⁹ Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, Encyclical Letter for the Twentieth Anniversary of *Populorum Progressio* (1987), no. 43, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis.html.

¹⁰ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy* (1986), no. 80, <https://www.usccb.org/resources/economic-justice-all-pastoral-letter-catholic-social-teaching-and-us-economy>.

to assure that the right of each person to basic health care is respected—and with promoting the good health of all in the community. The responsible stewardship of health care resources can be accomplished best in dialogue with people from all levels of society, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity and with respect for the moral principles that guide institutions and persons.

Fifth, within a pluralistic society, Catholic health care services will encounter requests for medical procedures contrary to the moral teachings of the Church. Catholic health care maintains its integrity as a ministry carrying on the work of Jesus Christ, in fidelity to his Gospel, by providing high-quality health care in conformity with Catholic teaching and by refusing to provide or permit medical interventions that are judged morally wrong by the teaching authority of the Church. The institutional conscience of a Catholic health care service is rooted in its identity as a ministry and formed by the authoritative teaching of the Church.

Directives

1. A Catholic institutional health care service is a community that provides health care to those in need of it. This service must be animated by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and guided by the moral tradition of the Church.
2. Catholic health care should be marked by a spirit of mutual respect among caregivers that disposes them to care for and treat those it serves and their families with the compassion of Christ, sensitive to their vulnerability at a time of special need.
3. In accord with its mission, Catholic health care should distinguish itself by service to and advocacy for those people whose social condition puts them at the margins of our society and makes them particularly vulnerable to discrimination: the poor; the uninsured and the underinsured; children; pregnant women and the unborn; single parents; the elderly; those with incurable diseases and chemical dependencies; racial minorities; immigrants and refugees. In particular, the person with mental or physical disabilities, regardless of the cause or severity, must be treated as a unique person of incomparable worth, with the same right to life and to adequate health care as all other persons.
4. A Catholic health care institution, especially a teaching hospital, will promote medical research consistent with its mission of providing health care and with concern for the responsible stewardship of health care resources. Such medical research must adhere to Catholic moral principles.
5. Catholic health care services must adopt these Directives as policy, require adherence to them within the institution as a condition for medical privileges and employment, and provide appropriate instruction regarding the Directives for administration, medical and nursing staff, and other personnel.

6. A Catholic health care organization should be a responsible steward of the health care resources available to it. Collaboration with other health care providers, in ways that do not compromise Catholic social and moral teaching, can be an effective means of such stewardship.¹¹
7. A Catholic health care institution must treat its employees respectfully and justly. This responsibility includes: equal employment opportunities for anyone qualified for the task, irrespective of a person's race, sex, age, national origin, or disability; a workplace that promotes employee participation; a work environment that ensures employee safety and well-being; just compensation and benefits; and recognition of the rights of employees to organize and bargain collectively without prejudice to the common good.
8. Catholic health care institutions have a unique relationship to both the Church and the wider community they serve. Because of the ecclesial nature of this relationship, the relevant requirements of canon law will be observed with regard to the foundation of a new Catholic health care institution; the substantial revision of the mission of an institution; and the sale, sponsorship transfer, or closure of an existing institution.
9. Employees of a Catholic health care institution must respect and uphold the religious mission of the institution and adhere to these Directives. They should maintain professional standards and promote the institution's commitment to human dignity and the common good.

¹¹ The duty of responsible stewardship demands responsible collaboration. But in collaborative efforts, Catholic health care services must be attentive to occasions when the policies and practices of other institutions are not compatible with the Church's authoritative moral teaching. At such times, Catholic health care institutions should determine whether or to what degree collaboration would be morally permissible. To make that judgment, the sponsors, governing boards, and other appropriate senior leaders of Catholic institutions should adhere to the moral principles on cooperation. See Part Six.

PART TWO

The Pastoral and Spiritual Responsibility of Catholic Health Care

Introduction

The dignity of human life flows from creation in the image of God (Gn 1:26), from redemption by Jesus Christ (Eph 1:10; 1 Tm 2:4-6), and from our common destiny to share a life with God beyond all corruption (1 Cor 15:42-57). Catholic health care has the responsibility to treat those in need in a way that respects the human dignity and eternal destiny of all. The words of Christ have provided inspiration for Catholic health care: “I was ill and you cared for me” (Mt 25:36). The care provided assists those in need to experience their own dignity and value, especially when these are obscured by the burdens of illness or the anxiety of imminent death.

Since a Catholic health care institution is a community of healing and compassion, the care offered is not limited to the treatment of a disease or bodily ailment but embraces the physical, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions of the human person. The medical expertise offered through Catholic health care is combined with other forms of care to promote health and relieve human suffering. For this reason, Catholic health care extends to the spiritual nature of the person. “Without health of the spirit, high technology focused strictly on the body offers limited hope for healing the whole person.”¹² Directed to spiritual needs that are often appreciated more deeply during times of illness, pastoral care is an integral part of Catholic health care. Pastoral care encompasses the full range of spiritual services, including a listening presence; help in dealing with powerlessness, pain, and alienation; and assistance in recognizing and responding to God’s will with greater joy and peace. It should be acknowledged, of course, that technological advances in medicine have reduced the length of hospital stays dramatically. It follows, therefore, that the pastoral care of patients, especially administration of the sacraments, will be provided more often than not at the parish level, both before and after one’s hospitalization. For this reason, it is essential that there be very cordial and cooperative relationships between the personnel of pastoral care departments and the local clergy and ministers of care.

Priests, deacons, religious, and laity exercise diverse but complementary roles in this pastoral care. Since many areas of pastoral care call upon the creative response of these pastoral caregivers to the particular needs of patients or residents, the following directives address only a limited number of specific pastoral activities.

Directives

10. A Catholic health care organization should provide pastoral care to minister to the religious and spiritual needs of all those it serves. Pastoral care personnel—clergy, religious, and lay alike—should have appropriate professional preparation, including an understanding of these Directives.

¹² United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Health and Health Care*, p. 5.

11. Pastoral care personnel should work in close collaboration with local parishes and community clergy. Appropriate pastoral services and/or referrals should be available to all in keeping with their religious beliefs or affiliation.

12. For Catholic patients or residents, provision for the sacraments is an especially important part of Catholic health care ministry. Every effort should be made to have priests assigned to hospitals and health care institutions to celebrate the Eucharist and provide the sacraments to patients and staff.

13. Particular care should be taken to provide and to publicize opportunities for patients or residents to receive the sacrament of Penance.

14. Properly prepared lay Catholics can be appointed to serve as extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, in accordance with canon law and the policies of the local diocese. They should assist pastoral care personnel—clergy, religious, and laity—by providing supportive visits, advising patients regarding the availability of priests for the sacrament of Penance, and distributing Holy Communion to the faithful who request it.

15. Responsive to a patient’s desires and condition, all involved in pastoral care should facilitate the availability of priests to provide the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, recognizing that through this sacrament Christ provides grace and support to those who are seriously ill or weakened by advanced age. Normally, the sacrament is celebrated when the sick person is fully conscious. It may be conferred upon the sick who have lost consciousness or the use of reason, if there is reason to believe that they would have asked for the sacrament while in control of their faculties.

16. All Catholics who are capable of receiving Communion should receive Viaticum when they are in danger of death, while still in full possession of their faculties.¹³

17. Except in cases of emergency (i.e., danger of death), any request for Baptism made by adults or for infants should be referred to the chaplain of the institution. Newly born infants in danger of death, including those miscarried, should be baptized if this is possible.¹⁴ In case of emergency, if a priest or a deacon is not available, anyone can validly baptize.¹⁵ In the case of emergency Baptism, the chaplain or the director of pastoral care is to be notified.

18. When a Catholic who has been baptized but not yet confirmed is in danger of death, any priest may confirm the person.¹⁶

¹³ Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, cc. 921-923, https://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canonici/eng/documents/cic_lib4-cann879-958_en.html#Art. 2.

¹⁴ Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, c. 867, § 2, and c. 871.

¹⁵ To confer Baptism in an emergency, one must have the proper intention (to do what the Church intends by Baptism) and pour water on the head of the person to be baptized, meanwhile pronouncing the words: “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

¹⁶ Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, c. 883, 3°.

19. A record of the conferral of Baptism or Confirmation should be sent to the parish in which the institution is located and posted in its baptism/confirmation registers.

20. Catholic discipline generally reserves the reception of the sacraments to Catholics. In accord with canon 844, §3, Catholic ministers may administer the sacraments of Eucharist, Penance, and Anointing of the Sick to members of the oriental churches that do not have full communion with the Catholic Church, or of other churches that in the judgment of the Holy See are in the same condition as the oriental churches, if such persons ask for the sacraments on their own and are properly disposed. With regard to other Christians not in full communion with the Catholic Church, when the danger of death or other grave necessity is present, the four conditions of canon 844, §4, also must be present, namely, they cannot approach a minister of their own community; they ask for the sacraments on their own; they manifest Catholic faith in these sacraments; and they are properly disposed. The diocesan bishop has the responsibility to oversee this pastoral practice.

21. The appointment of priests and deacons to the pastoral care staff of a Catholic institution must have the explicit approval or confirmation of the local bishop in collaboration with the administration of the institution. The appointment of the director of the pastoral care staff should be made in consultation with the diocesan bishop.

22. For the sake of appropriate ecumenical and interfaith relations, a diocesan policy should be developed with regard to the appointment of non-Catholic members to the pastoral care staff of a Catholic health care institution. The director of pastoral care at a Catholic institution should be a Catholic; any exception to this norm should be approved by the diocesan bishop.

PART THREE

The Professional-Patient Relationship

Introduction

A person in need of health care and the health care professional treating that person as a patient enter into a relationship that requires, among other things, mutual respect, trust, honesty, and appropriate confidentiality. The resulting free exchange of information must avoid manipulation, intimidation, or condescension. Such a relationship enables the patient to disclose personal information needed for effective care and permits the health care professional to use his or her professional competence most effectively to maintain or restore the patient's health. Neither the health care professional nor the patient acts independently of the other; both participate in the healing process.

Today, a patient often receives care from a team of health care professionals, especially in the setting of the modern acute-care hospital. But the resulting multiplication of relationships does not alter the personal character of the interaction between health care professionals and the patient. The relationship of the person seeking health care and the professionals providing that care is an important part of the foundation on which diagnosis and care are provided.¹⁷ Diagnosis and care, therefore, entail a series of decisions with ethical as well as medical dimensions. The health care professional has the knowledge and experience to pursue the goals of healing, the maintenance of health, and the compassionate care of the dying, taking into account the patient's convictions and spiritual needs, and the moral responsibilities of all concerned. The person in need of health care depends on the skill of the health care professional to assist in preserving life and promoting health of body, mind, and spirit. The patient, in turn, has a responsibility to use these physical and mental resources in the service of moral and spiritual goals to the best of his or her ability.

When the health care professional and the patient use institutional Catholic health care, they also accept its public commitment to the Church's understanding of and witness to the dignity of the human person.¹⁸ The Church's moral teaching on health care nurtures a truly interpersonal professional-patient relationship. This professional-patient relationship is never separated, then, from the Catholic identity of the health care institution. The faith that inspires Catholic health care guides medical decisions in ways that fully respect the dignity of the person and the relationship with the health care professional.

¹⁷ Technology, including Artificial Intelligence, can never replace the human relationship between the health care professional and the patient. Human beings are by nature meant to be in relationships with persons. On the intrinsically relational character of human beings, see Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and Dicastery for Culture and Education, *Antiqua et Nova*, Note on the Relationship between Artificial Intelligence and Human Intelligence (2025), nos. 18-20,

https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_dof_doc_20250128_antiqua-et-nova_en.html. On the use of Artificial Intelligence in health care, see nos. 71-76.

¹⁸ See Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dignitas Infinita*, no. 7 and nos. 17-22.

Directives

23. The inherent dignity of the human person must be respected and protected regardless of the nature of the person’s health problem or social status. The respect for human dignity extends to all persons who are served by Catholic health care.

24. In compliance with federal law, a Catholic health care institution will make available to patients information about their rights, under the laws of their state, to make an advance directive for their medical treatment. The institution, however, will not honor an advance directive that is contrary to Catholic teaching. If the advance directive conflicts with Catholic teaching, an explanation should be provided as to why the directive cannot be honored.

25. Each person may identify in advance a representative to make health care decisions as his or her surrogate in the event that the person loses the capacity to make health care decisions. Decisions by the designated surrogate should be faithful to the person’s intentions and values, or if the person’s intentions are unknown, to the person’s best interests. In the event that an advance directive is not executed, those who are in a position to know best the patient’s wishes—usually family members and loved ones—should participate in the treatment decisions for the person who has lost the capacity to make health care decisions.

26. The free and informed consent of the person or the person’s surrogate is required for medical treatments and procedures, except in an emergency situation when consent cannot be obtained and there is no indication that the patient would refuse consent to the treatment. This obligation to obtain consent requires that the person or the person’s surrogate receive all reasonable information about the essential nature of the proposed treatment and its expected benefits; its risks, side-effects, consequences, and cost; and the same information about any reasonable and morally legitimate alternatives, including no treatment at all. Each person or the person’s surrogate should also have access to morally sound resources and guidance, including pastoral counsel and ethics consultations, so as to be able to form his or her conscience. The free and informed health care decision of the person or the person’s surrogate is to be followed so long as it does not contradict Catholic teaching (including that specified in these Directives).

27. If a patient or a patient’s surrogate requests a medical intervention that is not in accord with Catholic teaching, health care professionals may not refer the patient to another professional for the purpose of obtaining that intervention. If a patient or a patient’s surrogate requests a transfer of care to another health care professional or facility that he or she has independently chosen, health care professionals should facilitate a safe transfer of care in compliance with legal and professional requirements while avoiding immoral cooperation.¹⁹

28. Since “creation is prior to us and must be received as a gift,” we have a duty “to protect our humanity,” which means first of all, “accepting it and respecting it as it was created.”²⁰ In order

¹⁹ See Part Six, Collaborative Arrangements with Other Health Care Organizations and Providers.

²⁰ Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*, Post-Synodal Exhortation on Love in the Family, no. 56, https://www.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-

to respect the nature of the human person as a unity of body and soul, Catholic health care services must not provide or permit medical interventions, whether surgical, hormonal, or genetic, that aim not to restore but rather to alter the fundamental order of the human body in its form or function.²¹ This includes, for example, some forms of genetic engineering whose purpose is not medical treatment,²² as well as interventions that aim to transform sexual characteristics of a human body into those of the opposite sex (or to nullify sexual characteristics of a human body).²³

29. In accord with the mission of Catholic health care, which includes serving those who are vulnerable, Catholic health care services and providers “must employ all appropriate resources to mitigate the suffering of those who experience gender incongruence or gender dysphoria” and to provide for the full range of their health care needs, employing only those means that respect the fundamental order of the human body.²⁴

30. Since the human person is a unity of body and soul, Catholic health care professionals and their patients have the duty and the right to preserve the integrity of the human body. It can be morally permissible, however, to remove or to suppress the function of one part of the body for the sake of the body as a whole under the following conditions: There must be no other reasonable means of addressing the pathological condition, the efficacy of the procedure must be reasonably well assured, and the benefits expected from the procedure must be proportionate to the burdens it imposes, including suffering, cost, and damage to the body. These conditions apply when the body part itself is diseased and presents a risk to the life or the well-ordered functioning of the body as a whole. They also apply when a healthy body part presents a risk to the life or the well-ordered functioning of the body as a whole because its presence or its functioning contributes to a serious pathology in another part of the body.²⁵

[ap_20160319_amoris-laetitia_en.pdf](#); see also, Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dignitas Infinita*, Declaration on Human Dignity, no. 60.

²¹ See USCCB Committee on Doctrine, “Doctrinal Note on the Moral Limits to Technological Manipulation of the Human Body” (2023), nos. 13-18, <https://www.usccb.org/resources/Doctrinal%20Note%202023-03-20.pdf>.

²² See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dignitas Personae*, Instruction on Certain Bioethical Questions (2008), no. 27, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20081208_dignitas-personae_en.html.

²³ See Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dignitas Infinita*, Declaration on Human Dignity, no. 59: “All attempts to obscure reference to the ineliminable sexual difference between man and woman are to be rejected.” Persons affected by Disorders of Sex Development, however, may exhibit ambiguous or abnormal indicators of sexual difference. An intervention aimed at resolving such abnormalities would not constitute an attempt to alter the fundamental order of the human body (see no. 60).

²⁴ See USCCB Committee on Doctrine, “Doctrinal Note on the Moral Limits to Technical Manipulation of the Human Body,” no. 18.

²⁵ See Pope Pius XII, “Address to the Participants of the 26th Congress Organized by the Italian Society of Urology,” October 8, 1953, I, https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/fr/speeches/1953/documents/hf_p-xii_spe_19531008_congresso-urologia.html. See also Pope Pius XII, “Address to the Participants of the First International Congress on the Histopathology of the Nervous System,” 14 September 1952, https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/fr/speeches/1952/documents/hf_p-xii_spe_19520914_istopatologia.html.

31. The transplantation of organs from living donors is morally permissible when such a donation will not sacrifice or seriously impair any of the donor's essential bodily functions and when the anticipated benefit to the recipient is proportionate to the harm done to the donor. Furthermore, the freedom of the prospective donor must be respected, and economic advantages should not accrue to the donor.²⁶

32. No one should be the subject of medical or genetic experimentation, even if it is therapeutic, unless the person or surrogate first has given free and informed consent. In instances of nontherapeutic experimentation, the surrogate can give this consent only if the experiment entails no significant risk to the person's well-being. Moreover, the greater the person's incompetency and vulnerability, the greater the reasons must be to perform any medical experimentation, especially those that are nontherapeutic in nature.

33. The well-being of the whole person must be taken into account in deciding about any therapeutic intervention. Therapeutic interventions that are likely to cause adverse effects can be justified only by a proportionate benefit to the patient. While every person is obliged to use ordinary/proportionate means to preserve his or her health, no person is obliged to submit to a health care intervention whose expected benefits--in the free and informed judgment of the person (or the person's surrogate)--are not proportionate to the risks, burdens, or expense imposed on the person, the family, or the community.²⁷

34. Health care professionals are to respect each person's privacy and confidentiality regarding information related to the person's diagnosis, treatment, and care.²⁸

35. Health care professionals should be educated to recognize the symptoms of abuse and violence and are obliged to report cases of abuse to the proper authorities in accordance with local statutes.

36. Compassionate and understanding care should be given to a person who is the victim of sexual assault. Health care professionals should cooperate with law enforcement officials and offer the person psychological and spiritual support as well as accurate medical information. A female who has been raped should be able to defend herself against a potential conception from the sexual assault. If, after appropriate testing, there is no evidence that conception has occurred already, she may be treated with medications that would prevent ovulation, sperm capacitation, or fertilization. It is not permissible, however, to initiate or to recommend interventions that have as their purpose

²⁶ See Pope John Paul II, "Address to Participants of the First International Congress of the Society for Organ Sharing," 20 June 1991 (https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1991/june/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19910620_trapianti.html).

²⁷ See Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, Encyclical Letter on the Value and Inviolability of Human Life, no. 65., https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae.html, and Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Declaration on Euthanasia*, Part IV; see also directive 56.

²⁸ See Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and Dicastery for Culture and Education *Antiqua et Nova*, nos. 90-94.

or direct effect the removal, destruction, or interference with the implantation of a human embryo.²⁹

37. An ethics committee or some alternate form of ethical consultation should be available to assist by advising on particular ethical situations, by offering educational opportunities, and by reviewing and recommending policies. To these ends, there should be appropriate standards for medical ethical consultation within a particular diocese that will respect the diocesan bishop's pastoral responsibility as well as assist members of ethics committees to be familiar with Catholic medical ethics and, in particular, these Directives.

²⁹ It is recommended that if an abortifacient intervention is requested by a survivor of a sexual assault the provider advise the woman of the ethical standards that prevent Catholic hospitals from providing any abortifacient interventions; see directive 45.

PART FOUR

Issues in Care for the Beginning of Life

Introduction

The Church's commitment to human dignity inspires an abiding concern for the sanctity of human life from its very beginning, and for the dignity of marriage and the marriage act by which human life is transmitted. The Church cannot approve medical practices that undermine the biological, psychological, and moral bonds on which the strength of marriage and the family depends.

Catholic health care ministry witnesses to the sanctity of life “from the moment of conception until death.”³⁰ The Church's defense of life encompasses the unborn and the care of women and their children during and after pregnancy. The Church's commitment to life is seen in its willingness to collaborate with others to alleviate the causes of infant and maternal mortality and to provide adequate health care to mothers and their children before and after birth.

The Church has the deepest respect for the family, for the marriage covenant, and for the love that binds a married couple together. This includes respect for the marriage act by which husband and wife express their love and cooperate with God in the creation of a new human being. The Second Vatican Council affirms:

This love is an eminently human one . . . it involves the good of the whole person . . . The actions within marriage by which the couple are united intimately and chastely are noble and worthy ones. Expressed in a manner which is truly human, these actions signify and promote that mutual self-giving by which spouses enrich each other with a joyful and a ready will.³¹

Marriage and conjugal love are by their nature ordained toward the begetting and educating of children. Children are really the supreme gift of marriage and contribute very substantially to the welfare of their parents. . . . Parents should regard as their proper mission the task of transmitting human life and educating those to whom it has been transmitted. . . . they are thereby cooperators with the love of God the Creator and are, so to speak, the interpreters of that love.³²

³⁰ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2319.

³¹ Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (1965), no. 49, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html.

³² Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 50.

For legitimate reasons of responsible parenthood, married couples may limit the number of their children by natural means.³³ The Church cannot approve contraceptive interventions that “either in anticipation of the marital act, or in its accomplishment or in the development of its natural consequences, have the purpose, whether as an end or a means, to render procreation impossible.”³⁴ Such interventions violate “the inseparable connection, willed by God . . . between the two meanings of the conjugal act: the unitive and procreative meaning.”³⁵

With the advance of the biological and medical sciences, society has at its disposal new technologies for responding to the problem of infertility. While it is heartening that many of these technologies have potential for good, one cannot assume that what is technically possible is always morally right. Reproductive technologies that substitute for the marriage act are not consistent with human dignity. Just as the marriage act is joined naturally to procreation, so procreation is joined naturally to the marriage act. As Pope John XXIII observed:

The transmission of human life is entrusted by nature to a personal and conscious act and as such is subject to all the holy laws of God: the immutable and inviolable laws which must be recognized and observed. For this reason, one cannot use means and follow methods which could be licit in the transmission of the life of plants and animals.³⁶

Because the moral law is rooted in the whole of human nature, human persons, through intelligent reflection on their own spiritual destiny, can discover and cooperate in the plan of the Creator.³⁷

Directives

38. When the marital act of sexual intercourse is not able to attain its procreative purpose, assistance that does not separate the unitive and procreative ends of the act, and does not substitute for the marital act itself, may be used to help married couples conceive.³⁸

³³ See Pope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, Encyclical Letter on the Regulation of Birth, no. 10, https://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2370.

³⁴ Pope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, Encyclical Letter on the Regulation of Birth, no. 14.

³⁵ Pope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, Encyclical Letter on the Regulation of Birth, no. 12.

³⁶ Pope John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*, Encyclical on Christianity and Social Progress (1961), no. 193, quoted in Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum Vitae*, no. 4.

³⁷ Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*, Encyclical Letter Regarding Certain Fundamental Questions of the Church’s Moral Teaching (1993), no. 50, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor.html.

³⁸ “Homologous artificial insemination within marriage cannot be admitted except for those cases in which the technical means is not a substitute for the conjugal act but serves to facilitate and to help so that the act attains its natural purpose” (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum Vitae*, Part II, B, no. 6; see also Part I, nos. 1, 6).

39. Techniques of assisted reproduction also must not involve the cryopreservation or destruction of human embryos³⁹ or the cryopreservation of human gametes for the purpose of immoral methods of reproduction.⁴⁰ Post-mortem gamete retrieval is not permitted.

40. Heterologous fertilization (that is, any technique used to achieve conception by the use of gametes coming from at least one donor other than the spouses) is prohibited because it is contrary to the covenant of marriage, the unity of the spouses, and the dignity proper to parents and the child.⁴¹ Furthermore, heterologous fertilization is also prohibited because it typically involves the destruction or cryopreservation of human embryos.

41. Homologous artificial fertilization (that is, any technique used to achieve conception using the gametes of the two spouses joined in marriage) is prohibited when it separates procreation from the marital act in its unitive significance (e.g., any technique used to achieve extracorporeal conception).⁴² Furthermore, homologous artificial fertilization is also prohibited when it involves the destruction or cryopreservation of human embryos.

42. Because of the dignity of the child and of marriage, and because of the uniqueness of the mother-child relationship, participation in contracts or arrangements for surrogate motherhood is not permitted.⁴³ Moreover, the commercialization of such surrogacy denigrates the dignity of women, especially the poor.⁴⁴

43. A Catholic health care institution that provides treatment for infertility should offer not only technical assistance to infertile couples, including restorative reproductive medicine, but also should help couples pursue other solutions (e.g., counseling, adoption).

44. A Catholic health care institution should provide prenatal, obstetric, and postnatal services for mothers and their children, including appropriate care and accompaniment during and after miscarriage, in a manner consonant with its mission.

45. Procured abortion (that is, the “deliberate and direct killing, by whatever means it is carried out, of a human being in the initial phase of his or her existence, extending from conception to

³⁹ Here, as throughout these Directives, the term “embryo” is used in the broad sense to refer to all the early stages of development beginning upon conception, such as zygote, blastocyst, and embryo.

⁴⁰ See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dignitas Personae*, nos. 12, 20.

⁴¹ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum Vitae*, Part II, A, no. 2; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2376.

⁴² “Artificial insemination as a substitute for the conjugal act is prohibited by reason of the voluntarily achieved dissociation of the two meanings of the conjugal act. Masturbation, through which the sperm is normally obtained, is another sign of this dissociation: even when it is done for the purpose of procreation, the act remains deprived of its unitive meaning: ‘It lacks the sexual relationship called for by the moral order, namely, the relationship which realizes “the full sense of mutual self-giving and human procreation in the context of true love” ’” (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum Vitae*, Part II, B, no. 6). See also *Donum Vitae*, Part II, B, no. 4(a); *Dignitas Personae*, no. 12; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2377.

⁴³ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dignitas Infinita*, nos. 48-50.

⁴⁴ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum Vitae*, Part II, A, no. 3.

birth”⁴⁵) is never permitted, whether chosen for its own sake or for a further end.⁴⁶ Every intervention, whether surgical or chemical, whose sole immediate effect is the destruction of a living human embryo or fetus or the removal of a living embryo or fetus from the uterus before viability is an abortion, which, in its moral context, includes the interval between conception and implantation of the embryo;⁴⁷ removal after viability with the intent for it to result in the death of a living fetus is also an abortion. Catholic health care institutions need to evaluate carefully the risk of scandal in any association with abortion providers, even when the association is limited and does not of itself constitute immoral cooperation with wrongdoing.

46. Catholic health care providers should be ready to offer compassionate physical, psychological, moral, and spiritual care to those persons who have suffered from the trauma of abortion.

47. Operations, treatments, and medications that have as their direct purpose the cure of a proportionately serious pathological condition of a pregnant woman are permitted when they cannot be safely postponed until the unborn child is viable, even if they will result in the death of the unborn child.

48. In case of extrauterine (ectopic) pregnancy, no intervention is morally licit which constitutes a direct abortion.⁴⁸

49. For a proportionate reason, labor may be induced after the fetus is viable.

50. Prenatal diagnosis is permitted when the procedure does not threaten the life or physical integrity of the unborn child or the mother and does not subject them to disproportionate risks; when the diagnosis can provide information to guide preventive care for the mother or pre- or postnatal care for the child; and when the parents, or at least the mother, give free and informed consent. Prenatal diagnosis is not permitted if undertaken with the intention of aborting an unborn child with a serious defect.⁴⁹

51. Nontherapeutic experiments on a living embryo or fetus are not permitted, even with the consent of the parents. Therapeutic experiments are permitted for a proportionate reason with the free and informed consent of the parents or, if the father cannot be contacted, at least of the mother. Medical research that will not harm the life or physical integrity of an unborn child is permitted with parental consent.⁵⁰

52. Catholic health institutions may not promote or condone contraceptive practices but should provide, for married couples and the medical staff who counsel them, instruction both about the

⁴⁵ Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, no. 58.

⁴⁶ See Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*, no. 78.

⁴⁷ See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dignitas Personae*, no. 23.

⁴⁸ See directive 45.

⁴⁹ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum Vitae*, Part I, no. 2

⁵⁰ See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum Vitae*, Part I, no. 4.

Church's teaching on responsible parenthood and in the various fertility-awareness-based methods of natural family planning.⁵¹

53. Direct sterilization of either men or women, whether permanent or temporary, is not permitted in a Catholic health care institution. Procedures that induce sterility are permitted when their direct effect is the cure or alleviation of a present and serious pathology, and a simpler treatment is not available.⁵²

54. Genetic counseling may be provided in order to promote responsible parenthood and to prepare for the proper treatment and care of children with genetic defects, in accordance with Catholic moral teaching and the intrinsic rights and obligations of married couples regarding the transmission of life.

⁵¹ Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, Apostolic Exhortation on the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World, no. 35, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_19811122_familiaris-consortio.html.

⁵² See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, "Responses to Questions Posed Concerning 'Uterine Isolation' and Related Matters," (1993), https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_31071994_uterine-isolation_en.html.

PART FIVE

Issues in Care for the Seriously Ill and Dying

Introduction

Christ's redemption and saving grace embrace the whole person, especially in his or her illness, suffering, and death.⁵³ The Catholic health care ministry faces the reality of death with the confidence of faith. In the face of death—for many, a time when hope seems lost—the Church witnesses to her belief that God has created each person for eternal life.⁵⁴

Above all, as a witness to its faith, a Catholic health care institution will be a community of respect, love, and support to patients or residents and their families as they face the reality of death. One of the primary purposes of health care for the dying is the relief of pain and suffering. Effective management of pain and other forms of suffering is critical in the appropriate care of the dying. While death itself may incite fear for patients and caregivers, for some it is even more difficult to face the process of dying, especially the dependency, the vulnerability and helplessness, and the sufferings that often accompany terminal illness.

The truth that human life is a sacred gift from God has profound implications for how we exercise stewardship of this gift. We are not the owners of our lives and, hence, do not have absolute power over life. We have a duty to preserve our life and to use it for the glory of God, but the duty to preserve life is not absolute. We may reject potentially life-prolonging interventions that are insufficiently beneficial or excessively burdensome. Suicide and euthanasia, however, are never morally acceptable options.⁵⁵

A fundamental part of the vocation of every health care professional is to provide care at all times, even when a cure is not possible. Reflection on the innate dignity of human life in all its dimensions and on the purpose of medical care is indispensable for formulating a true moral judgment about the use of various interventions in an attempt to maintain life. The use of life-sustaining interventions in Catholic health care is judged in light of the Christian meaning of life, suffering, death, and resurrection. In this way two extremes are avoided: on the one hand, an insistence on likely ineffective or burdensome interventions even when a patient may legitimately wish to forgo them; and, on the other hand, the withdrawal or application of interventions with the intention of causing death.⁵⁶

⁵³ Pope John Paul II, *Salvifici Doloris*, Apostolic Letter on the Christian Meaning of Human Suffering (1984), nos. 25-27, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1984/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_11021984_salvifici-doloris.html.

⁵⁴ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Order of Christian Funerals* (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1989), no. 1.

⁵⁵ See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Samaritanus Bonus*, Letter on the Care of Persons in the Critical and Terminal Phases of Life (2020), V, 1 (https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20200714_samaritanus-bonus_en.html).

⁵⁶ See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Declaration on Euthanasia*.

The Church's teaching authority has addressed the moral issues concerning medically assisted nutrition and hydration. We are guided on this issue by Catholic teaching against euthanasia, which is "an action or an omission which of itself or by intention causes death, in order that all suffering may in this way be eliminated."⁵⁷ While medically assisted nutrition and hydration are not morally obligatory in certain cases, these forms of basic care should in principle be provided to all patients who need them, including patients diagnosed with unresponsive wakefulness syndrome (formerly known as "persistent vegetative state") and other forms of neurologic injury, because even the most severely debilitated patient retains the full dignity of a human person and must receive ordinary and proportionate care.⁵⁸

Directives

55. Catholic health care institutions offering care to persons in danger of death from illness, accident, advanced age, or similar condition should provide them with appropriate opportunities to prepare for death. Persons in danger of death should be provided with whatever information is necessary to help them understand their condition and have the opportunity to discuss their condition with their family members and care providers. They should also be offered the appropriate medical information that would make it possible to address the morally legitimate choices available to them. They should be provided the spiritual support as well as the opportunity to receive the sacraments in order to prepare well for death.⁵⁹

56. A person has a moral obligation to use ordinary/proportionate means of preserving his or her life. Proportionate means are those that offer a reasonable hope of benefit and do not entail an excessive burden or impose excessive expense on the patient, the family, or the community.⁶⁰ A person may forgo extraordinary/disproportionate means of preserving life. Disproportionate means are those that do not offer a reasonable hope of benefit or entail an excessive burden, or impose excessive expense on the patient, the family, or the community.⁶¹ Such means are not morally obligatory. The final determination as to what constitutes a proportionate benefit and what constitutes an excessive burden belongs to the patient (or the patient's surrogate) and should be informed by professional medical advice.

⁵⁷ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Declaration on Euthanasia*, Part II.

⁵⁸ See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Samaritanus Bonus*, V, 8.

⁵⁹ This includes those patients awaiting transplants, as they and their caregivers live between the suffering of the terminal illness and the hope, but not guarantee, of extending life.

⁶⁰ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Declaration on Euthanasia*, Part IV; Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, no. 65.

⁶¹ For example, a patient (or his or her surrogate) may request a Do Not Attempt Resuscitation order (DNAR) if, in close consultation with the health care team, he or she determines that resuscitative measures would not offer a reasonable hope of benefit or entail excessive burden. It must be clear to patients, families, and caregivers that a DNAR order does not mean that ongoing care should cease; on the contrary, ordinary/proportionate care should continue.

57. The free and informed judgment made by a competent adult patient or surrogate concerning the use or withdrawal of life-sustaining interventions should always be respected and normally complied with, as long as it is not contrary to Catholic moral teaching.

58. In principle, there is an obligation to provide patients with food and water, including medically assisted nutrition and hydration for those who cannot take food orally.⁶² This obligation extends to patients in chronic and presumably irreversible conditions (e.g., a range of neurological conditions including unresponsive wakefulness syndrome, i.e., “persistent vegetative state”) who can reasonably be expected to live an indeterminate amount of time if given such care.⁶³ Medically assisted nutrition and hydration become morally optional when they cannot reasonably be expected to prolong life or when they would be “excessively burdensome for the patient or [would] cause significant physical discomfort, for example resulting from complications in the use of the means employed.”⁶⁴ For instance, as a patient draws close to inevitable death from an underlying progressive and fatal condition, certain measures to provide nutrition and hydration may become excessively burdensome and, therefore, not obligatory in light of their very limited ability to prolong life or provide comfort.

59. Euthanasia is any action or omission that of itself or by intention causes death in order to bring all suffering to an end. Catholic health care institutions may never condone or participate in euthanasia or assisted suicide in any way. Dying patients who request euthanasia should instead be given loving care, psychological and spiritual support, and appropriate remedies for pain and other symptoms so that they can live with dignity until the time of natural death.⁶⁵

60. If a patient expresses an intention to commit suicide by Voluntarily Stopping Eating and Drinking (VSED), he or she should be informed that the Catholic health care service will not facilitate this course of action.⁶⁶ Rather, health care professionals should do what they can, in a way that respects the patient’s freedom, to dissuade the patient from this course of action. They should continue to provide appropriate pain management while avoiding immoral cooperation

⁶² See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Samaritanus Bonus*, V, 3.

⁶³ See Pope John Paul II, “Address to the Participants in the International Congress on ‘Life-Sustaining Treatments and Vegetative State: Scientific Advances and Ethical Dilemmas’” (March 20, 2004), no. 4, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/2004/march/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_20040320_congress-fiamc.html, where he emphasized that “the administration of water and food, even when provided by artificial means, always represents a *natural means* of preserving life, not a *medical act*.” See also Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Responses to Certain Questions of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Concerning Artificial Nutrition and Hydration” (August 1, 2007), https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20070801_risposte-usa_en.html.

⁶⁴ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Commentary on Responses to Certain Questions of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Concerning Artificial Nutrition and Hydration,” https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20070801_notacommento_en.html.

⁶⁵ See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Declaration on Euthanasia*, Part IV.

⁶⁶ Intended suicide by VSED should be distinguished from the natural loss of desire for food and water that often accompanies dying patients in the final stages of their illness.

with suicide by VSED. When appropriate, psychiatric care can be recommended. The pastoral care team should be consulted. Appropriate steps should be taken to avoid giving scandal.

61. Catholic health care services should strive to support those who suffer from life-limiting illness, including those awaiting transplants, with the full range of multidisciplinary palliative care in order to address suffering that may be physical, psychological, and spiritual. While such care includes effective pain relief therapy and symptom management, it also includes personal accompaniment, to counteract the isolation and loneliness that they may experience. Spiritual accompaniment, while not valorizing pain and suffering, should be available to help them to appreciate the Christian understanding of redemptive suffering.⁶⁷

62. For patients who are in the final phase of life before death, Catholic health care services have a duty to provide end-of-life care in keeping with Catholic teaching, including the psychological, communal, and spiritual support that patients and their families need.⁶⁸ This care should take place in the most suitable environment, whether at home, in a hospital, nursing home, or hospice center, and should facilitate the patient's contact with their family, friends, and parish or faith community as much as possible. Dying persons remain members of the family, members of society, and members of the Church or their faith communities; therefore every effort should be made to maintain their relationships and to counteract the isolation and loneliness that they may experience.

63. Since a person has the right to prepare for his or her death while fully conscious, he or she should not be deprived of consciousness without a compelling reason, especially in view of the necessity for preparation for death, for reception of the sacraments, and for conscious interaction with family and loved ones. If a patient is in the terminal phase of illness and typical pain-management therapies are ineffective, palliative measures that induce a temporary or intermittent loss of consciousness can be permitted provided that the patient or surrogate has given proper consent, a plan of care is in place that addresses degree and length of sedation, and the patient has had the opportunity to perform his or her personal and religious preparations for death (if he or she is capable of this). Medicines directed toward alleviating or suppressing pain and other symptoms may be given to a dying person, even if this therapy may indirectly shorten the person's life so long as the dose is therapeutic and the intent is not to hasten death.

64. Catholic health care institutions should encourage and provide the means whereby those who wish to do so may arrange for the donation of their organs and bodily tissue, for ethically legitimate purposes, so that they may be used for transplantation and research after death.⁶⁹ Such organs may never be removed until it has been medically determined that the patient has died. The determination of death should be made by the physician or competent medical authority in accordance with well-founded medical criteria that establish with moral certitude that death has

⁶⁷ See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Samaritanus Bonus*, V, 4.

⁶⁸ See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Samaritanus Bonus*, V, 5.

⁶⁹ The conditions for free and informed consent must also be fulfilled in the case of someone arranging for the donation of their organs and bodily tissue, including the provision of all the relevant information that is reasonably available. See Part Three, Directive no. 26.

occurred.⁷⁰ In order to prevent a conflict of interest, the physician who determines death must not be a member of the transplant team.

65. The use of tissue or organs from an infant may be permitted after death has been determined and with the informed consent of the parents or guardians.

66. Catholic health care institutions should not make use of human tissue obtained by direct abortions even for research and therapeutic purposes.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Moral certitude is not absolute certitude, such as one finds in mathematical equations, as “it does admit the absolute possibility of the contrary,” but it does mean that “well-founded or reasonable doubt” is excluded (Pope Pius XII, Address to the Tribunal of the Sacred Roman Rota [October 1, 1942], as quoted by Pope John Paul II, Address to the Roman Rota [February 4, 1980], no. 6, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1980/february/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19800204_sacra-rot.html). Absolute certitude is not morally obligatory for an action to be ethical.

⁷¹ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum Vitae*, Part I, no. 4; *Dignitas Personae*, no. 35.

PART SIX

Collaborative Arrangements with Other Health Care Organizations and Providers⁷²

Introduction

In and through her compassionate care for the sick and suffering members of the human family, the Church extends Jesus' healing mission and serves the fundamental human dignity of every person made in God's image and likeness. Catholic health care, in serving the common good, has historically worked in collaboration with a variety of non-Catholic partners. Various factors in the current health care environment in the United States, however, have led to a multiplication of collaborative arrangements among health care institutions, between Catholic institutions as well as between Catholic and non-Catholic institutions.

Collaborative arrangements can be unique and vitally important opportunities for Catholic health care to further its mission of caring for the suffering and sick, in faithful imitation of Christ. For example, collaborative arrangements can provide opportunities for Catholic health care institutions to influence the healing profession through their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Moreover, they can be opportunities to realign the local delivery system to provide a continuum of health care to the community, to provide a model of a responsible stewardship of limited health care resources, to provide poor and vulnerable persons with more equitable access to basic care, and to provide access to medical technologies and expertise that greatly enhance the quality of care. Collaboration can even, in some instances, ensure the continued presence of a Catholic institution, or the presence of any health care facility at all, in a given area.

When considering a collaboration, Catholic health care administrators should seek first to establish arrangements with Catholic institutions or other institutions that operate in conformity with the Church's moral teaching. It is not uncommon, however, that arrangements with Catholic institutions are not practicable and that, in pursuit of the common good, the only available candidates for collaboration are institutions that do not operate in conformity with the Church's moral teaching.

Such collaborative arrangements can pose particular challenges if they would involve institutional connections with activities that conflict with the natural moral law, church teaching, or canon law. Immoral actions are always contrary to "the singular dignity of the human person, 'the only creature that God has wanted for its own sake.'"⁷³ It is precisely because Catholic health care services are called to respect the inherent dignity of every human being and to contribute to the common good that they should avoid, whenever possible, engaging in collaborative arrangements that would involve them in contributing to the wrongdoing of other providers.

⁷² See: Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, "Some Principles for Collaboration with non-Catholic Entities in the Provision of Healthcare Services," published in *The National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly* 14, no. 2 (2014): 337-40.

⁷³ Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*, no. 13.

The Catholic moral tradition provides principles for assessing cooperation with the wrongdoing of others to determine the conditions under which cooperation may or may not be morally justified, distinguishing between “formal” and “material” cooperation. *Formal* cooperation “occurs when an action, either by its very nature or by the form it takes in a concrete situation, can be defined as a direct participation in an [immoral] act . . . or a sharing in the immoral intention of the person committing it.”⁷⁴ Therefore, cooperation is formal not only when the cooperator shares the intention of the wrongdoer, but also when the cooperator directly participates in the immoral act, even if the cooperator does not share the intention of the wrongdoer, but participates as a means to some other end. Formal cooperation may take various forms, such as authorizing wrongdoing, approving it, prescribing it, actively defending it, or giving specific direction about carrying it out. Formal cooperation, in whatever form, is always morally wrong.

The cooperation is *material* if the one cooperating neither shares the wrongdoer’s intention in performing the immoral act nor cooperates by directly participating in the act as a means to some other end, but rather contributes to the immoral activity in a way that is causally related but not essential to the immoral act itself. While some instances of material cooperation are morally wrong, others are morally justified. There are many factors to consider when assessing whether or not material cooperation is justified, including: whether the cooperator’s act is morally good or neutral in itself, how significant is its causal contribution to the wrongdoer’s act, how serious is the immoral act of the wrongdoer, and how important are the goods to be preserved or the harms to be avoided by cooperating. Assessing material cooperation can be complex, and legitimate disagreements may arise over which factors are most relevant in a given case. Reliable theological experts should be consulted in interpreting and applying the principles governing cooperation.

Any moral analysis of a collaborative arrangement must also take into account the danger of scandal, which is “an attitude or behavior which leads another to do evil.”⁷⁵ The cooperation of a Catholic institution with other health care entities engaged in immoral activities, even when such cooperation is morally justified in all other respects, might, in certain cases, lead people to conclude that those activities are morally acceptable. This could lead people to sin. The danger of scandal, therefore, needs to be carefully evaluated in each case. In some cases, the danger of scandal can be mitigated by certain measures, such as providing an explanation as to why the Catholic institution is cooperating in this way at this time. In any event, prudential judgments that take into account the particular circumstances need to be made about the risk and degree of scandal and about whether they can be effectively addressed.

Even when there are good reasons for establishing collaborative arrangements that involve material cooperation with wrongdoing, leaders of Catholic healthcare institutions must assess whether becoming associated with the wrongdoing of a collaborator will risk undermining their institution’s ability to fulfill its mission of providing health care as a witness to the Catholic faith and an embodiment of Jesus’ concern for the sick. They must do everything they can to ensure that the integrity of the Church’s witness to Christ and his Gospel is not adversely affected by a collaborative arrangement.

⁷⁴ Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, no. 74.

⁷⁵ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2284.

In sum, collaborative arrangements with entities that do not share our Catholic moral tradition present both opportunities and challenges. The opportunities to further the mission of Catholic health care can be significant. The challenges do not necessarily preclude all such arrangements on moral grounds, but they do make it imperative for Catholic leaders to undertake careful analyses to ensure that new collaborative arrangements—as well as those that already exist—abide by the principles governing cooperation, effectively address the risk of scandal, abide by canon law, and sustain the Church’s witness to Christ and his saving message.

While the following Directives are offered to assist Catholic health care institutions in analyzing the moral considerations of collaborative arrangements, the ultimate responsibility for interpreting and applying of the Directives rests with the diocesan bishop.

Directives

67. Each diocesan bishop has the ultimate responsibility to assess whether collaborative arrangements involving Catholic health care providers operating in his local church involve wrongful cooperation, give scandal, or undermine the Church’s witness. In fulfilling this responsibility, the bishop should consider not only the circumstances in his local diocese but also the regional and national implications of his decision.

68. When there is a possibility that a prospective collaborative arrangement may lead to serious adverse consequences for the identity or reputation of Catholic health care services or entail a risk of scandal, the diocesan bishop is to be consulted in a timely manner. In addition, the diocesan bishop’s approval is required for collaborative arrangements involving institutions subject to his governing authority; when they involve institutions not subject to his governing authority but operating in his diocese, such as those involving a juridic person erected by the Holy See, the diocesan bishop’s nihil obstat is to be obtained.

69. In cases involving health care systems that extend across multiple diocesan jurisdictions, it remains the responsibility of the diocesan bishop of each diocese in which the system’s affiliated institutions are located to approve locally the prospective collaborative arrangement or to grant the requisite nihil obstat, as the situation may require. At the same time, with such a proposed arrangement, it is the duty of the diocesan bishop of the diocese in which the system’s headquarters is located to initiate a collaboration with the diocesan bishops of the dioceses affected by the collaborative arrangement. The bishops involved in this collaboration should make every effort to reach a consensus.

70. Catholic health care organizations are not permitted to engage in immediate material cooperation in actions that are intrinsically immoral, such as abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, and direct sterilization.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ While there are many acts of varying moral gravity that can be identified as intrinsically evil, in the context of contemporary health care the most pressing concerns are currently abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, and direct sterilization. See Pope John Paul II’s Ad Limina Address to the bishops of Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas (Region X) (27 June 1998) https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1998/june/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19980627_ad-limina-usa-ix.html. See also “Reply of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

71. When considering opportunities for collaborative arrangements that entail material cooperation in wrongdoing, Catholic institutional leaders must assess whether scandal⁷⁷ might be given and whether the Church’s witness might be undermined. In some cases, the risk of scandal can be appropriately mitigated or removed by an explanation of what is in fact being done by the health care organization under Catholic auspices. Nevertheless, a collaborative arrangement that in all other respects is morally licit may need to be refused because of the scandal that might be caused or because the Church’s witness might be undermined.

72. The Catholic party in a collaborative arrangement has the responsibility to assess periodically whether the binding agreement is being observed and implemented in a way that is consistent with the natural moral law, Catholic teaching, and canon law.

73. Before affiliating with a health care entity that permits immoral procedures, a Catholic institution must ensure that neither its administrators nor its employees will manage, carry out, assist in carrying out, make its facilities available for, make referrals for, or benefit from the revenue generated by immoral procedures.

74. In any kind of collaboration, whatever comes under the control of the Catholic institution—whether by acquisition, governance, or management—must be operated in full accord with the moral teaching of the Catholic Church, including these Directives.

75. It is not permitted to establish another entity that would oversee, manage, or perform immoral procedures. Establishing such an entity includes actions such as drawing up the civil bylaws, policies, or procedures of the entity, establishing the finances of the entity, or legally incorporating the entity.

76. Representatives of Catholic health care institutions who serve as members of governing boards of non-Catholic health care organizations that do not adhere to the ethical principles regarding health care articulated by the Church should make their opposition to immoral procedures known and not give their consent to any decisions proximately connected with such procedures. Great care must be exercised to avoid giving scandal or adversely affecting the witness of the Church.

on Sterilization in Catholic Hospitals” (*Quaecumque Sterilizatio*) (13 March 1975), no. 1, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19750313_quaecumque-sterilizatio_en.html: “Any cooperation institutionally approved or tolerated in actions which are in themselves, that is, by their nature and condition, directed to a contraceptive end . . . is absolutely forbidden. For the official approbation of direct sterilization and, a fortiori, its management and execution in accord with hospital regulations, is a matter which, in the objective order, is by its very nature (or intrinsically) evil.” This directive supersedes the “Commentary on the Reply of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on Sterilization in Catholic Hospitals” published by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on September 15, 1977, in *Origins* 7 (1977): 399-400.

⁷⁷ See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: “Anyone who uses the power at his disposal in such a way that it leads others to do wrong becomes guilty of scandal and responsible for the evil that he has directly or indirectly encouraged” (no. 2287).

77. If it is discovered that a Catholic health care institution might be wrongly cooperating with immoral procedures, the local diocesan bishop should be informed immediately and the leaders of the institution should resolve the situation as soon as reasonably possible.

Conclusion

Sickness speaks to us of our limitations and human frailty. It can take the form of infirmity resulting from the simple passing of years or injury from the exuberance of youthful energy. It can be temporary or chronic, debilitating, and even terminal. Yet the follower of Jesus faces illness and the consequences of the human condition aware that our Lord always shows compassion toward the infirm.

Jesus not only taught his disciples to be compassionate, but he also told them who should be the special object of their compassion. The parable of the feast with its humble guests was preceded by the instruction: “When you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind” (Lk 14:13). These were people whom Jesus healed and loved.

Catholic health care is a response to the challenge of Jesus to go and do likewise. Catholic health care services rejoice in the challenge to be Christ’s healing compassion in the world and see their ministry not only as an effort to restore and preserve health but also as a spiritual service and a sign of that final healing that will one day bring about the new creation that is the ultimate fruit of Jesus’ ministry and God’s love for us.

MEDICAL STAFF BYLAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS

The foregoing Medical Staff Bylaws, Rules and Regulations were approved and adopted by resolution of the Board of Trustees of St. Joseph Hospital after considering the Medical Staff's recommendation and in accordance with and subject to the St. Joseph Hospital's charter, bylaws and rules and regulations.

The overall responsibility for the management and control of St. Joseph Hospital rests with the Board of Trustees. Therefore, to the extent that these bylaws differ from or are inconsistent with the charter, bylaws or any rule or regulation of the Board of Trustees, the Board of Trustees' charter, bylaws or rules or regulations shall take precedence and prevail.

APPROVED THIS 28th DAY OF May, 2026 AD

FOR THE MEDICAL STAFF MEMBERSHIP

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