

CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health System Medical Staff Chain of Command Process

It is the policy of CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health System to complete, organize, and timely exchange information between associates and other health care team members that are essential to meet the needs of the patient and family. When clinical concerns arise, associates should communicate the concerns up the appropriate chain of command to obtain further direction for the care of the patient.

DEFINITION

Chain of Command (COC)– Authoritative structure established to resolve administrative, clinical, or other patient safety issue by allowing healthcare clinicians to present an issue of concern through the lines of authority until a resolution is reached.

Communication of Clinical Concerns:

1. Code Blue is called overhead to obtain immediate assistance during potentially life threatening emergencies due to respiratory or cardiac arrest.
2. The Rapid Response Team (RRT) may be called by acute care areas to provide rapid assessment when a patient's condition is deteriorating and additional support is needed at the bedside.
3. For emergent needs that require practitioner contact:
 - a. The Charge Nurse or Nurse Director/House Supervisor should immediately place a call to the practitioner, while associates continue to manage the needs of the patient.
 - b. If unable to reach the practitioner or unable to resolve the concerns, the Nurse Director/House Supervisor should contact the practitioner at the next higher level. The process should be repeated until practitioner contact is made and notification of patient status is communicated. (e.g. – Intern, Resident, Chief Resident, Attending Physician or designated call coverage physician, Section Chief, Department Chairman/Vice Chairman, Chief of Staff, Vice President of Medical Affairs (VPMA) for the following facilities: Alamo Heights, Alon, Medical Center, Westover Hills, and New Braunfels and the Pediatrician in Chief (PIC) for Children's Hospital of San Antonio).
4. For non-emergent/urgent needs that require practitioner contact:
 - a. The staff should contact the appropriate practitioner and allow for a reasonable response time. A second attempt should be made before escalation of the patient care need.
 - b. If unable to reach the practitioner after two attempts, contact the Nurse Director/House Supervisor for assistance.
 - c. If unable to reach the practitioner or unable to resolve the concerns, the Nurse Director/House Supervisor should contact the practitioner at the next higher level. The process should be repeated until practitioner contact is made and/or the patient care need has been addressed (e.g. – Intern, Resident, Chief Resident, Attending Physician or designated call coverage physician, Section Chief, Department Chairman/Vice Chairman, Chief of Staff and Vice President of Medical Affairs (VPMA) for the following facilities: Alamo Heights, Alon, Medical Center, Westover Hills, and New Braunfels. and the Pediatrician in Chief (PIC) for Children's Hospital of San Antonio).