

Medical Board Statement of Principle on Culturally Competent Practice with Diverse Populations

Hospital for Special Surgery and its medical staff are committed to standards set out by The Joint Commission and the Institute of Medicine that call for effective, equitable, understandable and respectful quality of care and services that are responsive to the needs of diverse populations. These include diverse cultural health beliefs and practices, preferred languages, health literacy and other communication needs. Inequities in health care are well documented and result in disparities that directly affect the quality of patients' lives. The Department of Health and Human Services reports that there are significant numbers of individuals from various cultural backgrounds across the United States who do not attain their optimal health outcomes for reasons that include social determinants and inequities directly related to discrimination, prejudice and social injustice.

Hospital for Special Surgery provides care, admits, and treats patients and provides services without regard to age, race, color, creed, ethnicity, religion, national origin, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, veteran or military status, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other basis prohibited by federal, state, or local law or by accreditation standards. Consistent with this commitment, it is expected that all members of the HSS medical staff provide care with respect for the dignity and the uniqueness of each patient. Hospital for Special Surgery and its medical staff recognize that providing care that is respectful of and responsive to the cultural and linguistic needs of our diverse patient populations is critical to addressing disparities in health care outcomes.

In furtherance of this Statement of Principle, members of the HSS medical staff are expected to meet the following standards:

- Demonstrate awareness of the impact of social and cultural factors on health beliefs and behaviors
- Empower patients and their families to be active partners in medical encounters and the care process
- Accommodate patients' cultural, religious and spiritual beliefs and practices
- Provide health information to patients that is communicated at the appropriate literacy level and is targeted to the language and cultural norms of specific populations
- Engage in ongoing trainings and education around cultural competency

MEDICAL BOARD POLICY

TITLE: Medical Board Policy and Resources on LGBT Patients

PURPOSE:

HSS and its Medical staff hereby affirm our commitment to providing nondiscriminatory, respectful and high quality care and treatment to our LGBT patients.

BACKGROUND:

The Institute of Medicine, the American Medical Association, The Joint Commission, and numerous research and advocacy groups report that the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (“LGBT”) populations experience barriers to accessing healthcare services. Transgender patients in particular may face unique challenges in interactions with physicians, other healthcare providers, and hospital staff.

The New York State Attorney General’s Office has notified the New York hospital community that it views discriminatory treatment of transgender patients as unlawful gender discrimination.

HSS is proud of its designation as a Healthcare Equality Leader, recognized by the Human Rights Campaign for our commitment to eliminating barriers to healthcare for the LGBT populations.

DEFINITIONS (if applicable):

N/A

CONTENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Hospital has taken affirmative steps and has adopted policies and procedures to promote an environment that is sensitive to the needs of our LGBT patients. Among these are the following:

- An inclusive Hospital visitor policy that respects a patient’s right to identify to the Hospital the patient’s family members, loved ones, friends and support persons for visitation purposes
- Gender neutral restrooms throughout the Hospital
- A Hospital rooming policy that addresses the unique concerns and needs of transgender patients
- A patient registration initiative that captures a patient’s self-reported gender identity and preferred name and makes this information readily available in the EPIC record to Hospital physicians and staff

The following are specific physician accountabilities of special relevance to the LGBT communities we serve:

- When such information has not been disclosed and recorded at the point of registration, physicians and other clinical users of the EPIC system will add to a patient’s record the patient’s preferred name, gender identity, and pronoun, and will communicate these to the patient’s healthcare team.
- When a transgender patient presents for care, the patient will be addressed and referred to on the basis of their self-identified gender, using their preferred name and pronouns, regardless of the patient’s appearance, surgical history, legal name, or sex assigned at birth.
- All practitioners are charged with treating all individuals with courtesy, respect, and dignity. Any language or tone that a reasonable person would consider to demean, question, or invalidate a patient’s actual or perceived gender will not be used.
- Physicians will become knowledgeable about LGBT healthcare issues, through available training and resources.

REFERENCES:

All members of the HSS medical staff are required to view a 10-minute video produced by New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation titled *To Treat Me, You Have to Know Who I Am*. The Surgeon-in Chief’s office will distribute the link to the video by email to all members of the medical staff.

Members of the HSS medical staff are encouraged to review resource materials on delivery of healthcare to the LGBT populations. A representative list of available resources will be available on the HSS intranet.

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DATE REVISED/REVIEWED:

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APPROVED BY:

Transgender Task Force

Title

DISTRIBUTION:

Interdisciplinary Professional Standards Intranet Site

Approved by Medical Board 9.2.16