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**SITTERS/ATTENDANTS (IN-HOUSE)**  
**(For Non-Violent and/or Violent Patients)**

**PURPOSE:**

To identify nursing personnel responsibilities for in-house sitters/attendants that are assigned to care for patients that have a faculty physician's order for sitters in all inpatient areas excluding the Psychiatric Unit.

**POLICY:**

1. **Physician's Order**

A faculty physician's order is required for an in-house sitter/attendant and should be medically justified. The faculty physician's order must be renewed daily. Physicians will document if family can sit with patients in the orders.

- Exception:**
- a. Prisoner Patients (Hospital Policy, 2.20)
  - b. Northwest State School Patients and Private Duty Nurse or Sitter (Nursing Policy P-75, Private Duty Nurse or Sitter)

Manager/Charge Nurse will round on patient's daily to assess the continued need and notify the physician of the need to discontinue the order.

2. **Staff Office Notification**

Admitting or the Nursing Staff shall notify the Staffing Office/Administrative House Manager (after hours) when the initial physician's order for a sitter/attendant is written, with the following information:

- a. patient's name
- b. gender (added)
- c. room and bed number
- d. need for the sitter

3. **Staffing Office/ Administrative House Manager (AHM) and Unit Responsibilities**

The Staffing Office/Administrative House Manager shall be responsible for providing staff to cover any required sitter/attendant needs of the patient when the unit is unable to do so on all shifts. It is the responsibility of the Nursing Unit requiring sitter services to notify the Staffing Office/ Administrative House Manager when the services are no longer needed. The Staffing Office/ AHM shall then be responsible for canceling the scheduled sitters.

4. **Available, Reassigned, and Overtime Staff**

Available staff on the unit and reassigned staff should be utilized as sitters/attendants whenever possible. Sitters are nursing assistants or nursing students who have been trained by the staffing office. Overtime staff shall be a last coverage option and canceled when other staff can provide coverage with no overtime charge involved.

5. **Sitter Employee Responsibility**

The sitter employee is responsible for contacting the Staffing Office/House Manager **two hours prior to their scheduled shift** to confirm the patient's continued need for a sitter/attendant. Sitter employees arriving to work and finding the sitter need is no longer valid shall not be compensated.

6. **Sitter Log**

A sitter log shall be maintained in the staffing office for staff to sign as an in-house sitter/attendant. The log shall contain the following:

- a. employee name
- b. available phone number
- c. date
- d. shift working
- e. patient room/location.

Sitter Daily Care Log will be filled out on each patient and signed by the sitter and nurse at the end of their shift. The log shall be reviewed for opportunities for improvement.

7. **Cancellations or Absence**

An employee who cancels his/her sitter service and/or fails to give notice of an absence (3 times at any point in a calendar year) shall not be allowed to sign-up for duty on the sitter log for a period of 3 months. Cancellations are tracked for the calendar year.

8. **Availability List**

An employee may sign the sitter availability list maintained in the Staffing Office for future sitter services and provide the following: employee name, home phone number, and department/unit, work extension, and shift preference.

9. **Job Duties**

LSUHSC nursing personnel assigned, as sitters/attendants shall:

- a. assist with the patient's activities of daily living and
- b. report any pertinent information to the patient's primary nurse periodically throughout the assigned shift.
- c. sitter/attendant may be required to accompany patient to procedures/clinics if this is their only patient.

10. **Breaks and Meal Times**

The **Charge RN shall assign** meal times/breaks and ensure coverage for the sitter/attendant. The sitter/attendant shall remain with the patient at all times with the exception of assigned breaks/meals. Sitters shall not eat or drink in the patient's room or other patient care areas.

11. **Semi-Private Rooms**

Nursing personnel assigned as sitters/attendants in semi-private rooms may have a second sitter patient assigned to the room at the discretion of the House Manager/Charge RN.

12. **Staff's Responsibility of Patients Sharing A Sitter**

For patients who share a sitter, nursing staff on the unit shall be responsible for accompanying the patient to procedures and/or ambulating the patient, etc.

13. **Patient Transfer, Discharge, or Discontinuation**

The **Charge RN** shall be responsible for notifying the Staffing Office/House Manager when:

- a. the sitter's patient is transferred to another room/unit.
- b. the sitter's patient is discharged (or expired).
- c. the physician discontinues sitter/attendants orders.

14. **Restraints**

Refer to the following policies for restraint guidelines and qualifications for restraints.

Hospital Policy: 5.15 – Restraints

Hospital Policy: 5.15.2 – Restraint of Nonviolent Patient

Nursing Policy: R-45 - Restraint Application

References:

Hospital Policy: 2.20:	Prisoner Patients
Hospital Policy: 5.15:	Restraints
Hospital Policy: 5.15.2:	Restraint of Nonviolent Patient
Nursing Policy: R-45:	Restraint Application
Nursing Policy: P-75:	Private Duty Nurse or Sitter

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