(A) Policy statement

It is the policy of the Medical Staff and Hospital that the following standards for consultation shall be followed.

(B) Purpose of policy

The purpose of this policy is to help clarify the specific cognitive or procedural service(s) being requested by another member and expectations for consultation completion.

(C) Procedure

(1) When to Request

(a) Whereas judgment as to the nature of an illness and questions concerning prognosis rest with the attending physician responsible for the care of the patient, good medical practice requires the proper and timely use of consultation with persons qualified to give opinions in the field in which the advice is sought.

(b) When requesting a consultation, note whether the request is for consultation only, consultation and management of a problem, and/or change of service.

(c) In addition to a written order for consultation, a verbal physician to physician communication. Discussing the details of patient care is imperative.

(d) Consultant must communicate verbally and directly with the requesting service to lay out patient care and therapeutic plan.

(2) Notification Process
Standards for Consultation

(a) It is important to give a specific reason for requesting a consultation. "Patient known to you" is unacceptable and will not generate a consultation, but will instead result in notification of the patient's room number for a courtesy visit.

(b) The following order is appropriate when requesting a consultation: Please consult Dr. ______________ for (reason, e.g. diabetes).

(c) Consultations can only be obtained by approval of primary service responsible for patient.

Completion of Consultations

(a) A routine consultation should be completed by an attending physician within 24 hours unless the requesting physician specifies that the consultation can be delayed until the next regular business day.

(b) Upon receipt of consultation request, an urgent consultation should be completed within 8 hours. Urgent consultations should be called only for potentially serious or life-threatening medical/surgical conditions.

(c) A stat consultation is one that requires immediate attention to an emergent patient condition, including all consultations to Emergency Department (unless ED attending is agreeable to a longer time frame). In order to secure a stat consultation it is necessary that there be physician-to-physician contact, with the requesting physician present with the patient. Upon receipt of consultation request, all stat consultations should be initiated by consulting service within 30 minutes and completed within 2 hours.

Approved by:

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Carl Simo, M.D. Date
Chief of Staff
Chief Operating and Clinical Officer

Policies Superseded by This Policy:
- MS-CC-003 Standards for Consultation

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