NURSING SERVICES GUIDELINE
INPATIENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Guideline: **Merry Walker**

Policy Number Superseded:

Responsibility: All trained Inpatient Behavioral Health staff

Purpose of Guideline: To provide a method of safe and independent ambulation for patients who would normally be placed in a wheelchair.

Effective Date:
November 2025

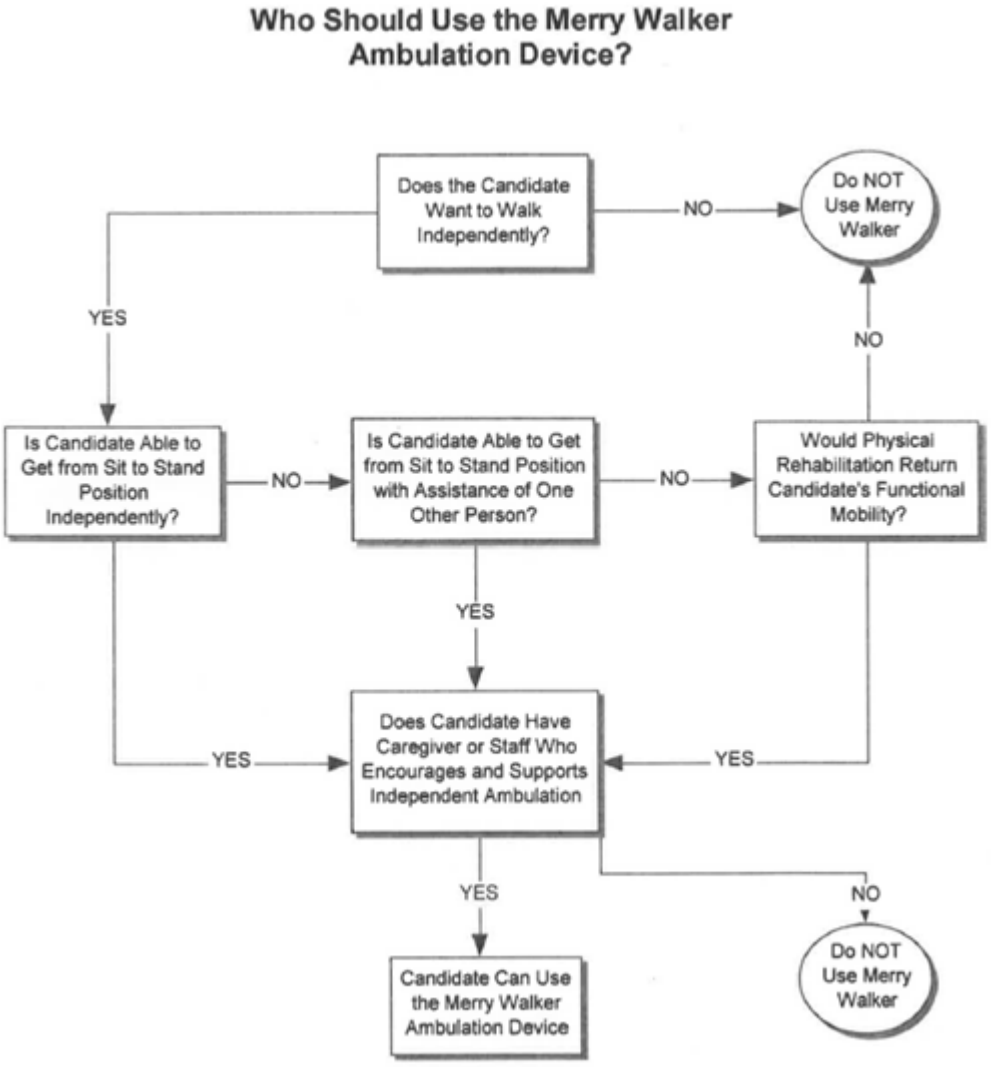
Initial Effective Date:
January 2017

Procedure:

(A) The purpose of the Merry Walker is to give patients the chance to walk safely.

(B) The Merry Walker is not considered a restraint as long as the patient is able to get themselves out of the walker.

(C) The patient must be assessed by utilizing the following flowchart, during every shift and with change of condition.



(D) The use of the Merry Walker will be documented by the nurse in the nursing progress notes.

(E) Medium walker: patient height of 5'3" to 5'7" and 95 to 300 pounds in weight.

(F) Large walker: patient height of 5'8" to 6' and up to 600 pounds in weight.

(G) Treatment plan will indicate usage of Merry Walker.

(H) Have patient sit down in the walker. The front cross bar must be secured; place the safety strap between patient's legs and secure over the top of the front cross bar. Ask the patient to stand up by placing their hands on the side rails. Have the patient place their hands on the front cross bar and start walking.

(I) If a patient begins to attempt to "climb out" of the walker, discontinue use of the Merry Walker for patient safety.

(J) A staff member must offer toileting at a minimum of every two hours and after every meal when a patient is utilizing the Merry Walker.

(K) The Merry Walker is to be sanitized and cleaned between each patient use (purple wipes) per UTMC infection control policy. The fabric on the chair must be laundered after each patient use. After cleaning, the walker will be stored in the Clean Equipment room.

(L) The patient cannot be left unattended while in the Merry Walker – patient is a LINE OF SIGHT while in the walker.

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Reviewed by Policy & Standard Committee
March 2020, December 2022

Initial effective date:
January 2017

Review/Revision Date:
March 2020
December 2022
November 2025

Next review date:
November 2028