

## Development of a Policy and Procedure Manual

### Suggested Policy Categories and Topic Areas

- General and administrative: non-clinical topics related to office operations, e.g., patient rights, privacy, confidentiality, communication, and scheduling appointments.
- Clinical policies: those involving patient care and procedures, medical records, and diagnostic testing.
- Human Resource policies: Licensure and certification, scope of practice, staff orientation and education, staffing, and staff meetings.

*The following list is from the ASHRM Physician Office Risk Management Playbook. It is advisable to include a process to ensure review and approval.*

#### **A. Access and appointments**

1. Referrals

#### **B. Patient rights**

1. Consent and informed consent
2. Complaints/grievances
3. Confidentiality
4. Advance directives

#### **C. Termination of relationships/services with patients**

#### **D. Billing/collection practices**

#### **E. Telephone triage/telephone encounters**

#### **F. Follow-up/handling of missed appointments, no-shows, cancelations**

#### **G. Availability of emergency and after-hours care**

1. Coverage during physician absence

#### **H. Patient follow-up for significant problems/illnesses, results of laboratory and diagnostic studies**

1. Hospitalization tracking
2. Test Tracking
3. Referral tracking

#### **I. Use of answering service**

#### **J. Dealing with medical emergencies**

#### **K. Chaperones during patient exams**

#### **L. Patient education**

#### **M. Reporting suspected abuse (e.g., child, partner, elder)**

#### **N. Safety plan**

#### **O. Risk Management Program**

#### **P. Personnel**

1. Job descriptions for all employees, with definitions of competencies required
2. Employee handbook

#### **Q. Medical records**

1. Documentation requirements
2. Protected health information (HIPPA)
3. Release/obtaining information from medical records
4. Fax machine policy
5. Maintenance/retention of records

**R. Equipment**

1. Equipment history (preventive maintenance)
2. Emergency cart
3. Computer downtime procedures

**S. Infection control**

1. Standard precautions
2. Hand hygiene
3. Cleaning, disinfection, and sterilization of equipment
4. Use of multiple-dose medication vials
5. Handling of sharps, hazardous wastes, including disposal
6. Latex allergies
7. Environment/housekeeping
8. Immunization policy

**T. Medications**

1. Medication safety procedures
2. Storage and handling
3. Dispensing/administration
4. Patient identification
5. Use of samples
6. Use of narcotics
7. Drug recalls
8. Reporting of drug defects/adverse drug reactions/medication errors

**U. Diagnostic tests**

1. Laboratory
  - a. Obtaining specimens
  - b. Appropriate identification of specimens
  - c. Storing/transporting specimens
2. Cardiology
3. Glucose monitoring
4. PAP test
5. Mammograms and other imaging studies

**V. Courier services**

1. Specimens
2. Mail

**W. Materials management**

1. Supplies
2. Printing

**X. Miscellaneous**

1. Staff meetings
2. Chain of command
3. Corporate compliance plan
4. Emergency preparedness