



BURGESS
Health Center

CODE OF CONDUCT



Message from the CEO



Dear Colleagues,

Every day we have the opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of others. Our patients, friends, and families trust us to provide the very best care and customer service, and every interaction we have with them is an opportunity to earn or lose that trust.

Our Code of Conduct supports our organization's Mission, Vision, and Values statements. It applies equally to everyone associated with the organization, including the Board of Trustees, the Medical Staff, and each of us as employees. The Code of Conduct emphasizes our shared culture of integrity and our responsibility to operate with the highest principles and ethical business standards as we strive to care for patients and each other with respect, honesty, compassion, and teamwork.

The Code of Conduct guides us to ensure our work occurs ethically and legally. It also contains resources to help resolve any issues you might come across. Please read this guide carefully, paying particular attention to those aspects of the Code that apply to your role, and use the information to guide your work at Burgess Health Center. Ask your leader if you have questions – or use the many great resources in our organization to help you find the answer.

Thank you for knowing and abiding by Burgess Health Center's Code of Conduct and living our Mission, Vision, and Values. Your adherence to its spirit and specific provisions is absolutely critical to our success and key to keeping our reputation one that others strive to emulate. Your hard work and dedication to making a difference for those we serve do not go unnoticed or without thanks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lynn R. Wold". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Lynn R. Wold

CEO

Why the Code of Conduct is Important

Each employee is held accountable for his or her behavior and action. In addition to supporting the Burgess mission, the Code of Conduct helps to ensure that all of our actions and behaviors are consistent with the numerous legal, ethical and professional obligations involved in our daily work. Actions and behaviors that are inconsistent with the Code of Conduct can harm relationships with patients, our communities, business partners and others we need to assist us in the delivery of health care services.

All individuals will be held accountable for actions and behaviors inconsistent with the Code of Conduct. Violations can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, suspension of medical staff privileges or termination of business relationships.

People - Our Responsibilities

The Code of Conduct applies to all employees, contract workers, volunteers, medical staff members, board members and business associates of Burgess.

You have a responsibility to:

- Review and follow the Code of Conduct, paying particular attention to those areas that apply to your every day work activities.
- Ask questions when you are uncertain what to do.
- Speak up when you are concerned about behavior that is inconsistent with the Code of Conduct.
- Support and promote our policy of non-retaliation against anyone who raises issues and concerns in good faith.
- Learn and follow applicable laws and regulations that affect your daily activities.
- Treat others with honesty, dignity, fairness and respect.
- Maintain a positive, courteous, customer-service oriented attitude and approach.
- Communicate with others in a clear, open and honest manner.
- Respect the diversity of others, including racial, ethnic, gender, religious and other differences.
- Abstain from inappropriate physical contact with co-workers and others who serve with you. Report harassment, intimidation or violence of any kind that you witness in the workplace.
- Do not use social media to communicate about patients.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I work with an employee who was disciplined for violating one of our policies. This employee was reported by one of his co-workers and he is now treating that co-worker very badly.

A: All employees are expected to report a policy violation. Retaliating against the person who reports violations is prohibited. This incident needs to be addressed according to existing human resources procedures at Burgess.

Q: One of my employees has reported an issue to me but doesn't want to tell me who is involved because he doesn't want the person to get in trouble. What should I do?

A: Promoting a culture of trust is critical to our organization. Thank the employee for bringing the issue to your attention. Let them know that you understand and appreciate the concern of his co-worker, but that it is important to follow up with the employee involved to address the issue and to prevent it from happening in the future. Knowing about a compliance issue and not acting on that knowledge an example of unethical behavior.

Q: I have noticed that a male vendor has been very "friendly" with female employees. There is a lot of touching even when other people are around. The employees seem very uncomfortable but haven't said anything to their supervisor.

A: This is clearly a matter that must be addressed according to existing procedures such as Burgess's harassment policy. If employees aren't comfortable approaching their supervisor on the issue, the problem should be discussed with the human resources department.



Quality

Burgess was founded on the commitment to make quality care the primary consideration in every aspect of the Health Center's business. Quality is the cornerstone of all the Health Center's actions and should be the driving force behind employee's decisions and actions.

What is expected of me?

- Deliver services with compassion, dignity and respect for everyone in your care.
- Maintain a positive, courteous and customer-service oriented attitude and approach.
- Act in the best interests of patients and others in your care. Respect the rights of patients to participate in health care decisions and inform patients of their rights as required by law.
- Promptly report any instances of observed or suspected abuse or neglect.
- Respond to requests for information, complaints, input or assistance in a timely and supportive manner.
- Deliver services in accordance with all professional evidence-based standards and regulations that apply to your position.
- Follow our organization's policies and procedures that promote a safe patient care environment and a safe working environment.
- Follow all regulations, laws and standards in providing patient care.
- Be sure that any independent contractors working with you abide by Burgess policies and procedures and all applicable laws and regulations.
- Clearly explain the outcome of any treatment or procedure to patients, family and/or representative as appropriate especially when outcomes differ from expected results.
- Address ethical conflicts that may arise in patient care. If necessary refer the issue to the Burgess ethics committee.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: If I see that a patient is not being treated with proper respect and courtesy by another employee or provider, what should I do?

A: First, ensure that the patient is not in harms way. Then, talk with the employee about your concerns. If the employee continues to act in the same manner, talk with your supervisor. If your supervisor does a satisfactory response, contact the next level supervisor, risk manager, or the compliance officer.

Q: I recently had a patient tell me that he does not want to receive any more treatment and just wants to be made comfortable and allowed to die. The patient does not think the physician is listening to him. What do I say to the patient?

A: Part of caring is listening to what the patient wants, even if the patient's decision conflicts with your personal values. First inform the patient of his/her rights and then act as an advocate. You should inform the patient's care team of his request and work with the patient and his family to meet his needs and wishes. It is important that the patient be presented with appropriate options to ensure the decision is an informed one.

Q: I work in an area where I have access to the patient registration system. Recently a friend of mine was seen in the emergency room and admitted to the hospital. Can I log into the system and see how she is doing or at least locate her room number?

A: Since you are not involved in your friend's care, you should not access her medical information or location. You may only access this type of information if you need to for your job. HIPAA requires that health care providers as well as their business associates protect the privacy and security of patient health information. It limits information to those with a need to know.



Q: A patient, who is confused much of the time, received an abrasion from an attempt to get out of bed. His daughter visits frequently, what should I do if she asks about the bruise?

A: Burgess' value of integrity requires that patients and their families, if appropriate, are told about all aspects of their care. This includes telling them about an unexpected harm that occurred as a result of their treatment or care. So, yes the family should be informed about the abrasion. If you are unsure how to approach the situation, consult with your supervisor and risk manager regarding the situation.

Financial Practices

Burgess Health Center's employees must be truthful and accurate in all records, reporting and billing activities.

What is expected of me?

- Follow all legal requirements, financial standards and accepted accounting principles in completing all financial records.
- All patient and hospital documents, records, reports and bills are prepared and maintained accurately.
- Bill only for services actually given to the patient and fully documented in the patient's medical record.
- If accuracy or reliability is unclear, take all necessary steps to verify the accuracy of the information.
- Only document in the medical record care you have given. Do not chart for someone else.
- In the event inaccuracies are discovered after bills are submitted, the inaccuracies must be reported immediately to your supervisor.
- Follow all requirements to document the medical necessity of procedures.
- Obtain and fully document necessary ABN (advance beneficiary notice).
- Be aware of red flags to help prevent identify theft

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Medicare notified us of some inaccuracies in our billing. The specific bills with the problems have been resolved but we haven't changed our practices that caused the errors in the first place. What is my responsibility?

A: All of us have a responsibility to ensure bills are prepared accurately. See if you can solve the issue or seek answers to your concerns. Speak with your manager to make sure you understand the situation. If you are still concerned, take your concern to the next level supervisor or the Compliance Officer or Hotline.

Q: One co-worker frequently leaves her documentation undone. She always plans to come back after checking in at home to do it, but instead she ends up calling in and asking whoever answers the phone to finish her documentation. I don't want to make her angry, but I feel uncomfortable with this. Am I right in feeling that she needs to do her own documentation?

A: The adage "if it's not documented it's not done" applies to all services. All providers are responsible for their own documentation. While everyone forgets once in a while and it is right to call in to let those currently caring for patients know you did indeed complete a task but forgot to document it, you should not document in the record for someone else. You should document that the individual called in to say they had completed the task. Since this is recurring, you should discuss your concerns with your coworker and if necessary with your supervisor.

Q: I hate to ask patients to sign an ABN (Advance Beneficiary Notice) so I will sometimes just not do it or put in a diagnosis I know will pass. Does this really cause problems?

A: ABNs are required by Medicare on many OP tests. Medicare has either National or Local Coverage Determinations which state that Medicare will only pay for these tests if the patient has certain diagnosis or conditions. When the provider has not indicated a condition or diagnosis that is covered, the employee must have the patient sign an ABN that says the patient will be responsible for the bill. You should contact the provider letting him or her know the diagnosis provided does not pass medical necessity. If an ABN is not signed then the hospital cannot bill the patient and must write off the bill. In addition, it is against Medicare regulations not to get an ABN signed.

Service

Excellent customer service is at the heart of all activity at Burgess. It is expected that all employees are cognizant of their behavior at all times and always place our patients and their families first. Complying with Burgess patient's rights and responsibilities is a part of service to our patients.

What is expected of me?

- To give patients and their families the caring and respect they deserve
- To abide by the patients right and responsibilities
- Communicate to your supervisor when Burgess service standards and policies are not being met.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I recently had a patient tell me that he does not want to receive any more treatment and just wants to be made comfortable and allowed to die. The patient does not think the physician is listening to him. What do I say to the patient?

A: Part of caring is listening to what the patient wants, even if the patient's decision conflicts with your personal values. First inform the patient of his/her rights and then act as an advocate. You should inform the patient's care team of his request and work with the patient and his family to meet his needs and wishes. It is important that the patient be presented with appropriate options to ensure the decision is an informed one.

Q: There are a lot of employees using cell phones at work. Is this allowed?

A. Cell phones have become an extension of some individuals in the recent years. They are so readily available. For this reason many people use their cell phone to talk or text without really realizing what the appearance is to others. It may also be misinterpreted that the staff on the cell phone is sharing confidential information with others outside of the hospital. Staff need to remember to limit their personal use of phones to break times. Also remember that texting of patient information is prohibited. Texting is not secure and violates our patient's HIPAA rights.

Q: I recently overheard some other employees talking about a patient who has "different" mannerisms that they consider to be humorous. I was hesitant to approach them because they previously have been somewhat rude to me.

A. There are a number of issues here. First, employees discussing patients with others who do not have a need to know is a HIPAA violation and should be reported to the privacy officer. Second, discussing someone's mannerisms is disrespectful of the individual whether they are a patient, employee or visitor. Burgess does not tolerate this type of behavior. This situation should be discussed with your supervisor or human resources.

Q. I have a friend who is in trouble at work and possibly with the OCR for liking a patients' comment on Facebook. How can that happen, she just "liked" her comment on the hospital's page.

A. Social media is tricky when it comes to HIPAA. The best practice is not to say anything at all. Do not friend patients on Facebook. If they already are your friend, do not initiate medically-based conversations. If they initiate, direct them to their provider. If you wish to discuss how they are – pick up the phone. The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) says that if we say or indicated anything that acknowledges that an individual is a patient (think Liking the comment), it is a violation of HIPAA.

Growth

Burgess Health Center and its employees are entrusted to safeguard property, and use Health Center assets, such as proprietary information and the assets of others which are in the Health Center's possession.

What is expected of me?

- Properly use and protect Burgess resources including supplies, equipment, staff time and talents, and financial assets
- Represent the organization honestly and ethically in all your work activities.
- Respect the environment and follow policies for handling and disposal of hazardous and infectious waste.
- Properly use and protect the confidentiality of business or other information you use or encounter in your work.

- Protect all patient business, and employee information even if the individual is no longer associated with Burgess.
- Do not use Burgess assets for personal use.
- Protect the assets of patients and others that have been entrusted to you for safekeeping.
- Use only your passwords and do not access information under another person's password.
- Do not share passwords.
- Use computer software and electronic mail for business purposes only.
- Use computer software only as permitted by license agreements.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I am aware of an employee who regularly uses the internet at work for personal activities. I am not in a position where I must “police” others in my department and their use of time on the job. What should I do?

A: It is the responsibility of each employee to preserve the resources or assets of the organization. These assets or resources include supplies, materials, equipment, information, intellectual property and time. All of these are to be used for business purposes only. First talk with the employee about your concerns. If you are still concerned, you should discuss this with your supervisor or the Compliance Officer.

Q: I supervise an employee who witnessed a co-worker giving the personal health information of a patient to a patient's relative who was not authorized to receive the information. What are my obligations in this circumstance? Should the patient be informed there has been a breach of confidentiality?

A: Sharing patient information is restricted to those who have a need to know or who have been designated by the patient to receive such information. Tell the employee of your concerns and immediately refer the matter to the Privacy Officer for appropriate follow up with those involved.

Q: How would the hospital know if I had looked at information I did not have a need to know about on the computer?

A: When you access any of the computers at Burgess you must log in. This allows staff to track when and where you have accessed information during that time. This is why you do not share your password. If you do that and the person gets into information that they do not have a need to know, it will show on your record.

Q: A co-worker said that he got into trouble for emailing patient information to another hospital. Everyone emails things now. Why would someone be disciplined for this?

A: With the use of technology today, it is easy to see why emailing and texting patient information would seem to be a good way to communicate. HIPAA privacy regulations are very precise on the need to only use encrypted electronic communication. General email and texting is not encrypted so the information in it is not protected and could be easily breached. Email from your hospital email account may be encrypted when PHI is in the text of the email or its attachments. You need to click on the “Encrypt & Send” button or type the word “secure” in the subject line of the message. Remember, text messages are not encrypted, and sending PHI that way is not allowed.

Anti-fraud and abuse, gratuities, and payments to government officials

Burgess Health Center competes on the basis of the quality and cost effectiveness of its services and products and will not use gifts, gratuities, bribes, or kickbacks to induce others to purchase the Health Center's services or refer patients to Burgess facilities.



What is expected of me?

- Follow all requirements of government and other insurance companies. This includes maintaining complete and accurate medical records, submitting only complete and accurate claims and protecting the privacy and security of the health information.
- Cooperate with any government investigation. Never destroy or alter documents, or provide false statements. Follow Burgess' record retention policies.
- Never offer payment of money, goods or anything of value in return for the referral of patients
- Never offer or give something of value to patients to encourage them to use or purchase health care services from Burgess.
- Never accept tips, gifts or gratuities from patients, residents, visitors, or vendors. Offers of these should be politely refused.
- No person involved with Burgess may pay more than "fair market value" for goods and services.
- Do not provide goods or services to others at less than "fair market value".
- The hospital or its employees, as the hospitals' representative, may not directly or indirectly campaign for or against the election of any candidate for public office.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: My department is going to purchase a new piece of equipment that is quite expensive. Several vendors have said they will take our whole department out to dinner while they are here demonstrating their product. My supervisor says we can't accept the invitation. I think we should be able to go.

A: While opportunities like this seem innocent, they are actually considered an inducement to purchase their product which may or may not be the best one for Burgess. Accepting gifts or gratuities from vendors is considered fraud. When a vendor provides a minimal gift such as donuts, it is important that they are available for everyone, not just those with a say in what purchases are made.

Q: A co-worker posted a notice on the bulletin board in support of a political candidate. Our supervisor took the notice down; saying that political campaigning is not allowed.

A: The supervisor is correct. Burgess is a not for profit organization. Any form of political activity or any form of solicitation on the premises is not allowed by any organization that has a tax-exempt status.

Conflicts of Interest

Employees and board members should avoid situations where personal interests are, or appear to be, in conflict with Burgess Health Center's interest.

What is expected of me?

- Always make decisions in the best interest of Burgess.
- Maintain objectivity and avoid actual or potential conflicts that might interfere with your responsibilities at Burgess. Remember that appearances do count!
- Maintain a courteous and customer-service oriented attitude when interacting with vendors and business partners.
- Follow the policies which require that you discuss and obtain the advance approval of your supervisor or higher level manager for any situation that could present an actual or potential conflict of interest with your work at Burgess.
- Follow policies requiring disclosure of any actual or potential conflicts of interest as applicable to your position.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I have been asked to serve on the board of another not for profit organization. Is that against Burgess policy?

A: No, actually employees are encouraged to actively participate in various organizations that benefit our communities. As a Burgess employee or business partner, just be sure that the organization's interests do not conflict with the interests of Burgess.

Q: My sister-in-law is a health care consultant. Would it be a conflict if I recommended her to work on a project at Burgess?

A: No, unless you do something to provide her with an advantage or special consideration. You need to fully disclose your relationship. You should not participate in the hiring decision, nor use your position to influence the outcome. Also you **MUST** not share information with your sister-in-law that other prospective vendors or consultants would not have.

Compliance with Laws

Burgess is committed to complying with the laws and regulations that govern its employees as a health care provider, employer and business. Employees are likewise responsible for complying with these laws. This includes antitrust, securities, labor laws, equal employment opportunity law and discrimination.

What is expected of me?

- Follow all laws and regulations.
- Ask for assistance when not sure about the regulations affecting your job duties.
- Ask for further education when needed to be able to perform your job duties correctly.
- Follow all hospital policies.
- Report any potential or suspected violations of regulations to your supervisor and or the compliance officer.
- Never retaliate against any employee who in good faith turns in a suspected compliance issue.

Compliance encompasses all aspects of our work at Burgess Health Center. Some situations are more difficult than others. Burgess has several resources to help with those issues. You may contact your supervisor, the compliance officer, or use the compliance hotline. **The Hotline is a mechanism to anonymously report compliance issues. It is 423-9176** and is answered by a voice mail. All reported compliance issues are thoroughly investigated.

Compliance involves doing the right thing. When faced with a difficult issue or when you are unsure what to do, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is the decision inconsistent with the mission and values of Burgess?
- Will the decision affect the quality of patient care?
- Would I be comfortable telling my family about the decision or having it described by the news media?
- Could the decision damage the reputation of Burgess and all affiliated with it?
- Is there something about the decision that bothers me, makes me feel uncomfortable or just doesn't "feel right"?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, seek assistance before going further.



CODE OF CONDUCT

I certify that I am responsible for the Burgess Health Center Code of Conduct and I agree to abide by its content.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

