

# POLICY MANUAL

---

**Subject:** Patient/Staff Relationships

**Effective Date:** 1/1/94

**Initiated By:** Cindy Stewart  
QI Coordinator

**Approved By:** James B. Moore  
Chief Executive Officer

**Review Dates:** 2/95 CSF; 2/97 CSF; 10/99 CSF  
09/08 cdb; 01/12 cdb, 3/14 cdb

**Revision Dates:** 03/07 cdb; 04/13 cdb

---

## POLICY:

Cumberland Heights recognizes its obligation to protect clients, employees, and the community at large from possible or perceived conflicts of interest. Therefore, acceptable and non-acceptable relationships are delineated.

Patient – persons admitted to inpatient, day treatment, or outpatient programs for chemical dependency treatment services; also included are family members and/or significant others of those patients.

Family and/or significant others – any person participating in a family program component, as well as the identified patient's mother, father, siblings, spouse, children (including step relationships); this definition includes those people who are in those roles regardless of the particular legal or blood status.

Termination of Services – a discharge from either inpatient, day treatment, or outpatient programs that does not include the patient's being admitted to the next level of care (i.e., a final discharge).

## PROCEDURE:

1. Employees use the following to determine appropriate behavior in avoiding conflicts of interest with patients:
  - A. No employee is to solicit for any type of business which involves any barter or monetary transaction with a patient for a minimum of two (2) years after termination of services. This includes, but is not limited to, individual or group counseling, sales of any kind, housing, rental, or leisure activities.
  - B. No employee is to participate in any one-on-one contact with a patient for a minimum of two (2) years. This includes, but is not limited to, social or romantic contact, self-help sponsorship, professional counseling, or telephone contact. Contact within the scope of an employee's job duties (such as aftercare/alumni contacts or volunteer work) is excluded from this prohibition.
  - C. No employee is to have direct contact with a patient via social media networks (i.e., LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, You Tube, or other various website applications) for a minimum of two (2) years.
  - D. No individual employee is to refer a Cumberland Heights' patient to his or her own individual or group counseling practice; however, the treatment team may make a decision

to refer a patient to another employee's individual or group counseling practice if it is to the best benefit of the patient.

- E. Immediate family members and/or significant others of employees are not treated at Cumberland Heights without prior approval by executive management. In the event of an emergency admission, the supervising executive manager of the employee is notified as soon as possible. If deemed necessary, arrangements are made for the earliest possible transfer to another appropriate facility. Under optimal operating conditions, referral to another facility is made prior to admission.
2. Employees having questions about any situation involving a potential conflict of interest should consult with their supervisors PRIOR to taking any action.
  3. Should an employee UNKNOWLINGLY (i.e., be unaware of the person's status as a Cumberland Heights patient) become involved with a patient in a manner contrary to this policy and procedure, the employee should discuss the circumstances with his/her supervisor IMMEDIATELY. The issue will then be handled via an ethics review (see related policy).
  4. Employees found to be in willful violation of this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.