

POLICY MANUAL

Subject: Patient Belongings Search

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POLICY:

In order to assist in establishing a safe environment, each patient is asked to sign consent for a search of his/her belongings. All patients' belongings are searched immediately upon admission to the facility. Prohibited items are destroyed, sent home with family or stored in restricted areas until the patient is discharged.

PROCEDURE:

A. Admissions

1. During the intake call, Intake staff alerts the prospective patient/ family member of what NOT to bring and what to bring.
2. An Admissions designee who is covering the window greets prospective patient/ family at the window and asks them to sign the Confidentiality Form. They are then given a Guest tag.
3. If prospective patient has come prepared to be admitted, the Admissions designee asks if he/she has any bags in his/her car. If so, he/she is accompanied to his/her car to retrieve them. A member of the Intake staff always accompanies the patient to his/her vehicle to bring the luggage into the admissions area.
4. The Admissions designee asks the patient to remove any medication from belongings. The medications are then put in a Ziploc bag, which is sealed, labeled and given to Triage Nurse.
5. The Admissions designee offers to take his/her bags, purse or any other carry in items. A list of Prohibited items is given to the potential patient for review. This review is done with the assessor and an acknowledgement form is signed and scanned into the patient's record. The patient will be asked to remove any valuables from his/her purse to be kept with him/her during the process and when the purse is not in his/her possession. The bags are then tagged with the person's First Name and Last Initial and bag #'s (i.e. 1 of 3). Youth patient's name will be written in red. All bags are then locked in the mechanical room for search by security personnel.

- A. Intake personnel will ask patients for prohibited items, including but not limited to, cell phones, car keys, and cameras. These items will be put into a Ziploc bag and listed on the Cumberland Heights Disposition of Prohibited Items sheet. If the admission process is not completed, the potential patient may keep these items with him/her. Once the admission process is completed, the bag containing prohibited items and the sheet listing prohibited items are placed with the patient's luggage to be searched by security personnel. Security staff will then put prohibited items in a security bag to be signed when bags are returned to patient.
 - B. When the luggage is returned to patient after the search, prohibited items kept by Cumberland Heights are placed in a security bag. The patient will sign stating he/she agrees with the listed contents in the bag.
 - 1. If there are family members with the patient, it is advisable for them to be asked to take prohibited items with them when they leave the property.
 - C. Patient will also be advised by Intake personnel on having valuables at Cumberland Heights. Valuables can be, but are not limited to, wallets, billfolds, cash, jewelry, credit and ATM cards.
 - 1. Intake designee will advise patient to keep only a minimum amount of valuable items, i.e., ATM card, small amount of cash, and minimum amount of jewelry.
 - 2. Patient is then advised to lock up any valuable items not immediately necessary with the Financial Office. The patient will be directed to that office during the intake process.
 - 3. Any items the patient wants to keep during the treatment process are taken by the Intake designee who will inspect these items for contraband. Staff will look through wallets and billfolds while the patient is with them.
 - 4. The items kept by the patient will be put into a clear Ziploc bag to be carried by the patient.
 - 5. When the patient is taken to medical after the admission process, the clear Ziploc bag carried by the patient lets medical know the items have been searched.
 - D. If the potential patient is not admitted to Cumberland Heights, the person will need to sign that all items taken from him/her have been returned to his/her possession.
- 6. If the patient is admitted, he/she will proceed with the normal procedures for assessment/admission.
 - 7. At the point of admission (all paperwork signed with Patient Registration), Security is contacted to move the bags and purses to the search area. The items are searched as patient is escorted to Medical. The bags will be taken to Medical once Security has completed the belongings search.
 - 8. If the patient is not admitted, his/her items are returned to him/her unsearched and he/she is free to leave.
 - 9. Youth patient's luggage and personal items will be searched a second time by youth therapy staff once patient is assigned to the youth building for treatment.
 - 10. In the event that Security is not available to do the luggage search within the four-hour time limit, the Intake Department will do the luggage search. If Security and Intake are unavailable, the Medical department will perform the search.

Patient Search

11. When Admissions staff has completed their procedures, the patient will be taken to medical for the remainder of the admissions process.
12. The Nurse admitting the patient will ask him / her to empty pockets. The pockets are to be turned inside out to ensure no items are hidden.
13. The nurse will ask the patient to remove shoes, socks, hats, etc. These items will be checked thoroughly for contraband.
14. Gloves are always worn when performing patient searches.
15. If prohibited items are found, they will be placed by Medical staff in a security bag. The Disposition of Prohibited Items list is signed by the patient and the nurse performing the search.
16. If any prohibited medications or drugs are found during the search, they are disposed of by Medical personnel per the *Outside Medications Brought in by Patients Policy*.

B. Belongings Search

1. Gloves are always worn when performing belongings searches.
2. Outside pockets of luggage are checked first. All items are removed from the bag and checked carefully. All containers are opened.
3. All clothing items are checked individually. The seams of each item of clothing are examined by hand and pockets are checked (inside and out).
4. The linings of all coats and jackets are checked carefully by feeling the entire item for hidden contraband.
5. The inside lining of all luggage is felt for hidden contraband.

C. Disposition of Prohibited Items List (see attached)

All prohibited items not sent home with family or destroyed by staff are placed in the Patients Belongings Secure Room. These items are added to the Disposition of Prohibited Items List and returned to the patient at discharge. Personal medications brought in by the patient are disposed of as explained in the *Outside Medications Brought in by Patients Policy*.