

POLICY MANUAL

Subject: Patient Care Errors

Effective Date: 1/1/03

Initiated By: Cinde Stewart Freeman
Chief Quality Officer

Approved By: James B. Moore
Chief Executive Officer

Review Dates: 12/02, 02/09 DNF, 05/09 BLA
01/10 Committee, 02/11 Committee, 10/12 Committee
2/14 Committee

Revision Dates:

POLICY:

Cumberland Heights makes every attempt to prevent patient care errors. When such an error occurs, Cumberland Heights' staff notifies the patient and/or guardian of a minor child that the error has occurred. Cooperative efforts to ameliorate the effect of any error and to prevent recurrence are made throughout the organization.

DEFINITION: A patient care error is defined as an act or an omission that departs from the plan of care, established policies and procedures, or established practice in the field of addictions treatment. These could include, but are not limited to: medication errors, misdiagnoses and delays or omissions in care.

PROCEDURE:

1. Staff Procedure
 - A. All staff receive information during orientation regarding the process for managing errors in patient care should they occur.
 - B. A staff member who becomes aware of a possible or actual error in patient care notifies their supervisor immediately.
 - C. The supervisor investigates to determine if an error has occurred.
 - D. If so, the staff member and/or supervisor notifies the manager, director, and supervising executive, as well as the Quality Management department. In the case of a medical error, the physician and Medical Director are notified as well.
 - E. The patient and/or legal guardian of a minor child is notified by the program director or designee of the error, including actions to be taken to ameliorate the effect of the error.
 - F. The program director, in conjunction with the Quality Management office, will investigate the error, identifying areas for improvement to prevent recurrence. An action plan will be developed, implemented, and monitored for effectiveness.

(continued)

2. Patient and/or Family Procedures

- A. Staff provide patients and families/significant others with information about Cumberland Heights practices in regards to handling errors in care should they occur. Patients and families/significant others are told that Cumberland Heights wants them to actively participate in their treatment and encourages them to speak out if they have a question or concern. They are also specifically involved of the procedure outlined below.
 - B. If a patient or family member/significant other believe that an error in care has occurred, they are encouraged to report this to the nearest staff member. That staff member will then take responsibility for reporting to their supervisor and following the procedure for staff outlined above.
 - C. If the patient or family member/significant other do not feel comfortable reporting to the nearest staff, they may discuss their concern with their counselor, the program director, or any member of the Quality Management staff. That staff member will then take responsibility for reporting to their supervisor and following the procedure for staff outlined above.
 - D. Should it be determined that an error in care has not occurred and the patient or family member is unsatisfied with that determination, the patient and/or family member may proceed with the grievance process (see related policy on [Patient Grievances](#).)
3. In addition to the individual review of patient care errors described in item (1), the Quality Management Office reviews all patient care errors in aggregate for trends. The analysis is reviewed with Executive Management, including recommendations for corrective action.