

VCU HEALTH SYSTEM
MCV Hospitals and MCV Physicians

STUDENT ORIENTATION HANDBOOK

June 2009

DEVELOPED BY THE:
VCUHS Department of Human Resources

WELCOME

The VCU Health System (VCUHS) would like to welcome you to our organization. We hope your learning experiences here will be enriching and that you will consider us in your future career decisions. The purpose of the booklet is to introduce you to our organization and provide you with useful information that will make your tour with us enjoyable and safe.

Once you have reviewed the handbook, you will be required to complete the following documents:

- **Competency Documentation Orientation to VCUHS-Case Study**
- **Confidentiality Agreement**
- **Orientation Handbook Agreement**

You will submit the forms on-line via the OnBoarding Hub. You will receive an email with the link to access the documents. If you have questions or have not received an email with the link to access the forms, please call 628-0918.

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ABOUT THE VCU HEALTH SYSTEM

The VCU Health System is comprised of a joint association between the Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Sciences programs and MCV Hospitals and MCV Physicians. MCV Hospitals is the teaching hospital component of the VCU Health System, which also includes a number of outpatient clinics; and MCV Physicians, a 600-physician, faculty group practice. The VCUHS is the only academic medical center in Central Virginia and is a regional referral center for the state. With 822 licensed beds, MCVH has approximately a 20% share of the Richmond inpatient market. The VCUHS records over 31,000 admissions and more than 500,000 outpatient visits each year. Over 82,000 patients are treated annually in the hospital's Emergency Department, which is the region's only Level I Trauma Center.

The VCU Health System comprises nearly 200 specialty areas, many of national and international note. In addition to multidisciplinary centers for cancer, cardiology, neurosurgery, and transplantation, the VCUHS offers virtually every form of contemporary medical service. In particular, the VCUHS has received international recognition for early diagnosis and treatment of chest pain and strokes, organ transplant, head and spinal cord trauma research, burn and wound healing, neonatal intensive care, and genetic research, as well as cancer research, treatment, and rehabilitation.

The VCUHS delivers oncology patient care services for VCU's Massey Cancer Center; a National Cancer Institute designated facility, which offers patients many multidisciplinary treatment options and access to clinical research trials. VCUHS has been recognized in the past by U.S. News & World Report for its leadership in neurology, neurosurgery, orthopaedics, respiratory disorders, digestive tract, rehabilitation, and gynecology. In 2007 and 2008, the VCUHS received the Richmond Chamber of Commerce Employer of Choice Award and was elected to the Companies Who Care Honor Roll in 2006. Again in 2007, we were listed in Working Mothers' Magazine as one of the top 100 companies to work for AND we were awarded Magnet Recognition by the American Nurses' Association.

Making medical history is only part of the reason for the excellent reputation of the VCUHS. Thanks to the dedication, compassion and expertise of its approximately 8,000 staff members - from doctors, nurses, and resident medical staff, to support personnel and administrators - the VCUHS has enjoyed a consistently high patient satisfaction rating. All of

this combines to strengthen the VCU Health System's position in the healthcare marketplace and protect our important mission of excellence in research, education, and patient care for the 21st century.

MISSION

The VCU Health System is committed to improving the quality of and access to patient care in Central Virginia and throughout the Commonwealth by:

- Providing superior, compassionate, and innovative patient care to improve the health of all members of the communities we serve.
- Educating the healthcare professionals of tomorrow, healthcare providers of today and the community at large.
- Advancing the generation, dissemination, and application of biomedical research.

VISION

Improving the health of all people as the preeminent academic health center in the region with national recognition for specialty care, innovative research and workforce development.

VALUES

Service

We will perform every customer interaction with a caring attitude, honesty and respect, putting our customer's needs first to yield exceptional customer service.

Trust

Through our integrity, respect of individuals, appreciation of diversity and commitment to privacy and safety, we achieve trust from those we serve and from those with whom we work.

Attitude

Our attitude is that in the pursuit of excellence, we display kindness, concern, compassion, and appropriate charity to those in our care.

Respect

We respect the dignity of each individual and the collective diversity of the communities we serve.

VCU HEALTH SYSTEM'S SENIOR LEADERSHIP

Michael Rao, PhD – VCU and VCUHS President, VCUHS Authority Board Chair

Sheldon M. Retchin, M.D. – VCUHS Chief Executive Officer, VCU Health System and Vice President of Health Sciences

Carl F. Gattuso – Chief Corporate Officer, VCU Health System

Dominic J. Puleo - Chief Financial Officer, VCU Health System

John Duval – Chief Executive Officer, MCV Hospitals

Deborah Davis – Chief Operating Officer, MCV Hospitals

Ralph R. Clark, M.D. – Chief Medical Officer, VCU Health System

John Ward, M.D. - President, MCV Physicians

James Potyraj - Executive Director, MCV Physicians

Jalana McCasland – Vice President, Ambulatory Care, MCV Physicians

Leah Wacksman – Interim Chief Nursing Officer, VCU Health System and Associate Dean

Maria Curran – Vice President Human Resources & Family Care Services, VCU Health System

Sheryl Garland – Vice President Community Outreach, VCU Health System

Darrell Johnson – Vice President Professional Services, MCV Hospitals

Larry Little – Vice President Support Services and Planning, VCU Health System

Linda Pearson – Chief Financial Officer, MCV Hospitals

Richard Pollack – Chief Financial Officer, VCU Health System

Jean F. Reed, J.D. – General Counsel, VCU Health System

Penny Trentham – Vice President Managed Care, VCU Health System

Marcos F. Irigaray – Vice President Strategy, VCU Health System

Shirley Gibson – Vice President, Nursing Operations

Cindy Earnhardt – Deputy Director, Audit Management Services, VCU

YOUR ROLE AND SUPERVISION

Students arrive at VCUHS from a variety of backgrounds and schools and with an assortment of learning goals. As a student, your role is to experience and absorb all you can in preparation for your future career goals. Students cannot function independently in the provision of care to our patients or performance of duties. Supervision by your instructor or another member of the health care team is required. While this does not mean that must have your instructor or a VCUHS staff member at your side at all times, it does mean that you cannot perform new procedures and tasks without supervision until someone (either your instructor or a VCUHS staff member at the professional level representative of your role) has confirmed your competency for the task(s) you are to perform. Please consult with your instructor and/or VCUHS staff member assigned to your area of learning before beginning your rotation to clarify expectations and limitations for your particular learning experience and to discuss your confirmed level of competency for assigned tasks. Communication is the key to success so when in doubt, ASK!

IDENTIFICATION BADGES

All persons who provide care or services to VCUHS customers must display proper identification that includes their name, job title, and the department to which they are assigned. Depending on the number of hours you are assigned to VCUHS, you may be required to wear a VCUHS picture ID or a VCUHS temporary ID along with your school picture ID. A picture ID **MUST** be worn at all times, face forward and above the waist, so you can be easily identified. Failure to wear your ID could result in your being denied access to your clinical assignment area.

CELL PHONES AND PAGERS

You may notice signs throughout the facilities that state, "Please Turn Off Cell Phones." These signs appear in areas, such as the Emergency Department and Intensive Care Units, that have highly sensitive medical instruments that may be affected by the interference of cell phone frequencies. Cell phones are allowed in all other areas of the Medical Center that do not have signage prohibiting cell phone use. Be courteous to others and do not use your cell phone except while on breaks or as required for your role. Keep both pagers and cell phones set to a silent alert. Video/camera phones cannot be used to take pictures or recordings without written consent of those being photographed.

DRESS CODE

VCUHS requires professional, healthcare provider appropriate attire whenever you report to a work unit. Attire must be clean, neat and of appropriate size. Uniforms or business attire representative of your professional career are expected. Manner of dress is often used by patients and families as a cue for recognizing the function of the staff members and may shape their perceptions about individuals and the Health System. Patients and family members undergoing the stress of outpatient visits and procedures, as well as hospitalization, need to feel confident in those caring for them. In addition to being in compliance with your school's dress code policy, the following dress code rules apply during your rotation at VCUHS.

- Hair shall be clean, well groomed, and worn in such a manner that it will not interfere with patient care or job duties and will present a professional image.
- Facial hair must be trimmed and kept clean.
- Make-up may be worn in moderation.
- No excessive perfume, aftershave or scents shall be worn. Use of deodorant and/or personal hygiene sprays/soaps are required unless it is medically contraindicated.
- Do not report to work with the smell of alcohol or other offensive body odors.
- Underwear shall be worn, but not be visible through the uniform fabric.
- Fingernails shall be kept short, clean, neatly manicured and not extend ¼ inch past the fingertips. Artificial nails and nail jewelry are prohibited per Health Department regulations in any patient care role. Artificial nails are defined as any application of a product to the nail to include, but not limited to, acrylic, overlay, tips or silk wraps (does not refer to nail polish). Chipped nail polish is not permitted.
- Jewelry shall be worn in moderation and not pose a safety hazard or interfere with patient care. Earrings should be worn in a professional manner; earrings are limited to 1-2 per ear.
- There will be no visible body piercing, including but not limited to, the following with the exception of ear piercing: no tongue piercing, no nose piercing, no eyebrow rings / bars. There will be no visible tattoos. Any visible tattoo must be covered with a bandage or clothing.
- Non-business use of earphones when providing customer services is prohibited.
- Non-skid shoes of moderate heel are recommended. Shoes should be close toed.

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXPECTATIONS

Excellent customer service is the kind of service that makes a lasting impression on your customers. It means meeting expectations and satisfying needs in such a way that you are seen as easy to do business with. We expect everyone who represents our organization, including students, to treat all internal (employees and physicians) and external (patients and visitors) customers with respect, courtesy and caring.

THE FIVE FUNDAMENTALS OF CUSTOMER SERVICE (Our Customer Service Pledge)

Value – I will value each person with whom I interact by demonstrating respect, integrity, and acceptance and the organization that I serve through taking responsibility for its success, appearance, and safety.

Commitment – I am committed to excellence in my performance, support of the VCUHS mission, stewardship of resources and protection of the VCUHS environment.

Understanding – I will strive to understand the needs of others, respect their privacy, communicate with them professionally, treat them with dignity and demonstrate appreciation of cultural differences.

Hospitality – I will embrace others with hospitality, kindness, open mindedness and a willingness to help.

Service – I will provide service to all guests efficiently, professionally, courteously and promptly.

If you experience problems related to customer service, please notify the manager of the area to which you are assigned.

APPRECIATION OF DIFFERENCES

VCUHS strives to provide equal opportunities, services, and access to all persons without regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, disability, or veteran's status. One of the great benefits for learning or working at VCUHS is our diverse population. We are internationally recognized in many of our areas of service and therefore, are fortunate to have patients, visitors and staff from around the world. If you have a patient from a culture you are not familiar with, check with the staff on your unit about resources available to help you better meet that patient's needs. VCUHS has a language line that can be used to access an interpreter to assist with patient teaching, consents, and other needed communication.

Any individual who feels that he or she has been the victim of harassment or discrimination is encouraged to report their concerns to either the department manager or the Department of Human Resources.

CONFIDENTIALITY EXPECTATIONS

Access to confidential information is permitted only on a need to know basis. During your rotation, you may have access to proprietary or other confidential business information belonging to the VCU Health System including but not limited to confidential information regarding VCU Health System employees, patients and patient care. Therefore, except as required by your role at VCUHS or by law, you are expected to limit your access to information to that specifically required in your role. Furthermore, it is expected that you will not disclose any information to any other person, or allow any other person access to, any information related to VCUHS which is proprietary or confidential and/or pertains to employees, patients or patient care. "Disclosure of information" includes, but is not limited to, verbal discussions, FAX transmissions, electronic mail messages, voice mail communication, written documentation, "loaning" computer access codes, and/or another electronic transmission or sharing of data.

CONFIDENTIALITY GUIDELINES

- All personal patient information should be kept private but generally, confidentiality pertains to information related to the patient's identity, physical or psychological condition (including tests, procedures, and outcomes), emotional status, and financial situation.
- Only discuss your patients with other health care workers who are also providing care to that same patient or who work on that unit.
- Do not share written or verbal information about a patient without first finding out if the individual asking for the information is authorized to have the information due to job duties or written consent from the patient. This includes not giving out information to the patient's family or friends.
- If the patient is a minor, written consent for release of information must be obtained from the parent or guardian.
- Do not discuss patient information or "stories" in the elevator, stairwells, waiting areas, lunchroom, etc. You never know who might be listening! Plus, VOICES carry!

- If you witness a breach of confidentiality, tell your instructor who will report it to the unit manager.
- When discussing your patients in classroom activities, please use initials only and remove any information that could identify the patient such as medical record number, social security number, address, next of kin, etc. from documents.

SUBPOENAS

Occasionally, a process server will bring a subpoena to a unit where you are working. If he/she tries to hand you the subpoena, do not accept it. Refer them to the Office of the General Counsel located in Putney House, 1st floor.

COMPUTER ACCESS

- You may be granted a computer access code to enter patient care provided. If you are, this access code acts as your electronic signature. Never share this code with anyone else.
- If you do not have an access code, ask your instructor how to document care. Usually there is someone on the unit authorized to enter information on your behalf.
- Never look up someone in the computer unless it is your own patient. You do not have authorization to “surf” the computer to find interesting cases to review or to check on someone else’s patient.

FAX TRANSMISSIONS

We prefer not to fax information, but occasionally it becomes necessary. All information faxed must have a cover sheet explaining our confidentiality requirements. Before faxing a document, verify the receiving number and that the line is secure. Dial the fax number carefully and verify that you have entered the correct number before hitting send. If you accidentally fax a document to a wrong location, immediately call that location to retrieve and destroy the document. Notify a VCUHS manager or staff member so that a record of the event can be recorded on the Patient Safety Net. Do not chart the occurrence in the medical record.

QUESTIONS REGARDING CONFIDENTIALITY OR HIPAA

For questions related to confidentiality or the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) contact the Corporate Compliance office at 828-0500. To report a HIPAA violation, call the Compliance Helpline at 1-800-620-1438.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROCESSES

VCUHS is committed to continuous quality improvements. One of the ways the Health System focuses on quality is through the use of a problem-solving technique called the FADE process:

Focus: Identify the specific problem you wish to work on.

Analyze: Determine influential factors; collect data.

Develop: Generate a list of possible solutions; choose the best solution; develop implementation plan.

Execute: Put plan into action and monitor results.

All departments are encouraged to have quality improvement measures in place to assist in helping our organization improve its overall performance and customer service. Please participate if asked to help us meet our goal of the Provider and Employer of Choice for the Richmond area.

CHANGES IN PATIENT CONDITION

If you observe a change in the patient's condition or if you have any other concern about the patient's condition, notify a staff member immediately. Remain with the patient until help arrives and then follow the staff's instructions. If the patient has stopped breathing or has no pulse, call *50 and announce Code Blue and the location.

Emergency response in the clinic areas consists of response from the Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT) and Emergency Medical Services (EMS), provided by Richmond Ambulance. The MERT team provides basic support, including an automated external defibrillator if necessary, until the ambulance team arrives. The team has the capability of using more invasive support measures, if a physician is present to order such measures. The MERT team is a core group of healthcare providers who have completed special training in basic life support, airway management, first aid, and use of the Automated External Defibrillator (AED). The MERT team is available Mon through Fri from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. If a medical emergency arises outside those hours, *50 will activate the operator who will send security as needed and who will call 911 for EMS service dispatch. MERT coverage is available only in the following buildings: Nelson, Ambulatory Care Center, AD Williams, Children's Pavilion, Stony Point, and Hayes E Willis.

If you are in a location away from the Medical Center, including Virginia Treatment Center, Sanger Hall and sidewalks, call 9-911 for assistance.

SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT

VCUHS is a smoke free environment. No smoking is allowed in any of our facilities except the Clinical Research Center and then only when smoking is an aspect of the research. Patients must have a doctor's order to leave the floor to smoke and must sign out before leaving and upon return. Staff are required to use the designated smoking areas located outside the Emergency Department entrance (smoke hut), outside Gateway on ED drive, in the southeast corner of the AD Williams building (12th and Marshall) or the east side of Children's Pavilion courtyard.

PATIENT FALLS (inpatient units)

VCU Health System's fall precaution program identifies patients with a high probability of falling by placing a red sticker on the door to the patient's room and giving the patient a special identification band. If one of your patients is identified in this way, special attention must be provided to make sure the patient does not get out of bed unassisted.

The following precautions are observed for patients who are at risk for falls:

- For all patients, upper bedside rails should remain in an upright position and the bed should remain at its lowest height at all times.
- If the patient attempts to climb over side rails, notify a staff member immediately and remain with the patient. Attempt to maintain patient safety while waiting for staff member assistance.
- If you are in an outpatient setting and witness a patient fall, do not attempt to move the patient. Notify a staff member immediately and remain with the patient.

RESTRAINT USE

Restraint use is limited to circumstances when a patient's safety is at imminent risk for self injury or injury to others or when clinically justified to prevent disruption of medically necessary therapy. Only staff who have been cleared as competent in the use of restraints and alternative measures may apply restraints. If your patient requires the use of a restraint, please refer to VCUHS Policy 4501.03, *Use of Restraints* for details of this policy prior to working with this patient.

REPORTING SUSPECTED CASE OF ABUSE

Suspected cases of child or adult abuse, neglect, sexual assault or domestic violence must be reported to the Department of Social Services. If you obtain information, witness interactions or overhear conversations that support that abuse, neglect or assault is occurring, please notify the Department Manager for your area so that the appropriate reporting process can be initiated.

SAFETY AWARENESS

VCUHS staff will provide instructions for you to follow in the event of an emergency or other unusual situation. Therefore, if such a situation occurs, always notify the staff immediately and remain with the patient.

Internal Disaster Situations: Dial *50 to call one of the codes listed below.

The following code names will be announced over the page system if an internal disaster situation occurs:

1. Dr. Black – bomb threat
2. Dr. Comfort – heating or air-conditioning failure
3. Dr. Data – Computer system is down
4. Dr. Gas – loss of medical gas and/or suctioning function
5. Dr. Green – hazardous material emergency
6. Dr. Hold – hostage situation
7. Dr. Lift – elevator emergency
8. Dr. Orange – internal infectious disease crisis
9. Dr. Pink – pediatric abduction
10. Dr. Power – utility failure
11. Dr. Red – fire emergency
12. Dr. Wet – flood emergency
13. Communication Disaster – Failure of telecommunication equipment

YOUR ROLE DURING THE ABOVE CODES

DR. BLACK – Bomb Threat

If you discover a package or letter that you feel may be a bomb, DO NOT touch or move it. Call VCU Police at 828-1234 immediately or if you are not at one of the VCUHS Medical Center facilities, call 911. Keep the person on the phone and get as much information as possible regarding the bomb's location, when it will activate, what type of bomb, what might set it off, etc. You may also call *50 and ask telepage to communicate a Dr. Black. Stay in your area and follow the instructions of the VCUHS staff present.

DR. COMFORT – Heating or Air Conditioning Failure

If the air conditioning or ventilation system fails, keep room doors closed for isolation rooms. For non-isolation rooms, offer cool drinks and foods as appropriate to patient diet, use portable fans approved by clinical engineering. Assist with moving patients to unaffected areas if instructed.

DR. DATA – Computer Systems are down for four or more hours

If the computer systems fail, documentation is completed through manual processes and entered into the computer systems once restored. Consult with VCUHS staff in your area regarding the appropriate forms and procedures to implement in the event of a computer failure.

DR. GAS – Disruption of Medical Gas Systems

If oxygen supplies are impaired, you may be asked to help manually ventilate patients with supplemental oxygen. If you do not know how to use an ambu bag, you must be instructed in its proper use prior to assisting with this task. Portable oxygen tanks will be used as available. If compressed air is lost, compressed air tanks (H cylinders) will be provided and portable air compressors for aerosol treatments.

DR. GREEN – Hazardous Material Emergency

Dr. Green would be announced if there was an emergency involving radioactive, chemical and/or biological hazards which requires use of decontamination facilities. As a student, you are to stay away from the exposed areas. If the exposure is in your area, follow the instructions of the VCUHS staff in that area.

DR. HOLD – Hostage Situation

Unless you are specifically involved in the hostage situation, you are to stay away from the area. If you are in the involved area, follow the instructions of the police or staff present.

DR. LIFT – Elevators Service Disrupted

If you are caught on an elevator when service is disrupted, use the phone in the elevator to call for assistance. Remain calm and follow the instructions of the facilities management staff. If you are not on the elevator, you will need to use the stairs to access floors above or below your location. You may be asked to serve as a runner to take supplies or delivery specimens to other areas.

DR. ORANGE –Epidemiological Crisis

Dr. Orange will only be announced if we have a large volume of potential infectious patients. Such an event could be related to a bioterrorism crisis. In such an event, instructions will be given to unit staff in your area specific to the personal protective equipment required and the restricted access areas. Follow these instructions.

DR. PINK – Pediatric Abduction

To safeguard infants and children, children are given a tag that will activate an automatic shut down procedure if the child leaves the unit with the tag alarm intact. If the alarm is activated, the elevators will not stop on a pediatric unit and the stairwell doors will automatically lock. If you are working on a pediatric unit and believe a child has been abducted, report this immediately to the staff to activate the Dr. Pink alarm and to initiate search procedures.

DR. POWER – Electrical Power and/or Emergency Power have Failed

If the power goes out, VCUHS has generator backups to operate red power receptacles in patient rooms. Move all essential electrical equipment to red outlets. Departments maintain a supply of flashlights and batteries to assist in helping you see as you move around. Tape bells will be distributed to substitute for the call-bell system to patients as available and staff will make frequent rounds to those without tap bells. Runners will be needed to take supplies and specimens throughout the organization. Beds will be programmed for manual operation. Please follow staff instructions regarding how to assist them in providing for patient safety during this time.

DR. RED - Fire

In the event of a fire, close all doors that do not close automatically. Do not use elevators. If the fire is in your area, and you have been trained in the use of a fire extinguisher during the past 12-months, you can attempt to put the fire out if it is still below waist level. If above waist level, evacuate the room and shut the door. Locate the pull stations and fire extinguisher locations on your unit as well as the evacuation plan in the event evacuation is necessary. Remember, don't be a hero! If you can't safely put out the fire, let the experts do it. In all cases, follow the instructions of the VCUHS staff in your area regarding when and if to evacuate.

In the event of a fire, we use the word R.A.C.E.R. to help us remember what to do:

Rescue anyone in danger

Activate the fire alarm - *50 in hospital buildings

Close all doors to contain smoke

Extinguish the fire if you have received fire extinguisher training
Relocate patients to a safe area when applicable.

If a fire alarm sounds in Main Hospital, an audible alarm and strobe lights will activate on the floor with the potential fire, two floors above that and one floor below. If you just see strobe lights but do not hear an alarm, you are on stay-by only for further instructions. There is no need to evacuate those areas.

If you are notified that an evacuation is required, follow the instructions of a VCUHS staff member regarding the evacuation route for your area.

- Main Hospital floors 3 through 11/Gateway/North Hospitals/Critical Care Hospital: Defend in Place – relocate to a safe area
- All other buildings, including Main Hospital basement through second floor: Fully evacuate.

DR. WET – Flooding or Excess Water Accumulation

Dr. Wet is called when an area is about to be or is flooded. Patients will be relocated to a dry area. Use caution when walking or moving equipment. Unplug and remove electrical equipment that may have become wet. DO NOT TURN IT ON. Do not use equipment that may have become wet until it has been cleared for use by Clinical Engineering.

COMMUNICATIONS CRISIS – Loss of Telephone Service or Paging

If the telephone system fails, cellular phones, two-way radios, personal pagers, pay phones and other communications equipment may be used as alternatives. Only cellular phones approved for use critical care areas can be used in those locations. Other frequencies could interfere with equipment and patient monitoring.

LOSS OF WATER OR VACUUM

Major water loss can also affect the provision of vacuum and suction on patient units. Emergency water for drinking will be distributed to units. Flushing of commodes should be limited and may be accomplished by pouring portable water into toilets. Ration use of ice and keep ice in insulated containers to preserve it from melting. Use waterless hand cleaners as much as possible to ration water use. Patient bathing should be limited to critical need and only sponge baths. Routine cleaning with water should be avoided or alternative cleaning agents used. Disposable products should be used to reduce sterilization requirements. If compressed air

is lost, Respiratory Care will bring regulators and Material Management will bring compressed air cylinders. Portable suction machines will be provided to units as needed.

CHEMICAL SAFETY, SPILLS AND WASTE DISPOSAL

Each department has a list of chemicals used in their areas and a copy of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), which explain, among other things, the risks involved, personal protective equipment needed in handling the chemical, what to do with exposures and how to handle spills. If you are unfamiliar with the chemical, ask to see the MSDS before using it and know where the spill kit is located, if applicable.

Chemical wastes must be stored properly prior to disposal. Containers should be compatible with the waste and protected from shock or breakage. DO NOT dispose of chemical in the sink or toilet. All containers must be properly labeled with the name of the chemical and hazard risks. All chemotherapeutic sharps and waste must be disposed into yellow containers.

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

In some areas, respirators (masks) are necessary to protect you from harmful dusts, fibers, fumes, mists, gases, or vapors. Individuals who wear respiratory protection must be fit-tested to determine if the respirator is providing an effective barrier. Staff and students who may be exposed to tuberculosis must be fit-tested for a specific (N-95) mask prior to entering a room where possible exposure could occur. If you have not been fit-tested and need to be, talk to your instructor about the best way to accomplish this prior to an assignment that may expose you to a respiratory risk.

INFECTIOUS WASTE

Materials contaminated with blood or body fluids must be discarded properly. Always use standard precautions when handling infectious or medical waste. Use red or orange bags to dispose of infectious waste materials. Place infectious sharps in a red, biohazard labeled, plastic sharps container that is no more than $\frac{3}{4}$ full. Do not mix non-infectious sharps with infectious sharps. Chemotherapeutic sharps are not to be placed in containers with infectious sharps. Chemotherapeutic agents must be placed in yellow containers.

RADIATION SAFETY

At VCUHS, the main sources of radiation exposure include laboratories, patients, and X-ray producing machines. Some of the areas or departments that use radiation and radioactivity include Nuclear Medicine, Diagnostic Radiology, Radiation Oncology, Clinical Pathology and some patient rooms. Rooms with radiation sources are labeled with a Radiation symbol and say “Caution-Radioactive Materials” or “Radioisotopes Used in this Room.” Do not enter these rooms without first talking to VCUHS staff about protective equipment and exposure precautions. If you are in a room when an X-ray is to be performed, either leave the room or put on the personal protective equipment specified by the X-ray technologist.

EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT

Do not use equipment that is not functioning properly. Remove the equipment from service, tag it with a DEFECTIVE tag and report it to a VCUHS staff member who will call Clinical Engineering to report the problem.

PERSONAL INJURIES

If you are injured while on VCUHS premises, please ask a VCUHS employee to assist you in completing an occurrence report. Follow your school’s procedures for reporting injuries and obtaining treatment. If you need emergency care, the VCUHS Emergency Department is located on the ground level of Main Hospital.

PERSONAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

VCUHS is committed to providing a safe environment to work, learn and receive care. The VCU Campus Police patrols all areas of both the Monroe Park and Medical Center Campus. In addition, MCV Hospitals has a Security staff that monitors access to the facilities and provides support with building checks and problem resolution. If you have an emergency while on the Medical Campus, call 828-1234 or 8-HELP. This will allow you access to help quicker than 911 since our police officers are already on site. If you would like an escort to your car between the hours of 5 pm and 8 am, an escort service is available by calling 828-WALK. Security phones are located throughout the campus in blue or yellow boxers with a flashing yellow light above them. You need only remove the phone from the cradle or push the button to activate a call to the police department.

DRUG FREE SCHOOL AND WORKPLACE

VCUHS expects all individuals providing care or customer services in our environment to be able to do so competently and unimpaired by chemical substances. If you suspect an individual of being impaired in the performance of their duties, please report your concern to the department manager of that area. If a student is suspected of being impaired, they will be reported to their school and removed from their assignment. Students may not return to their assigned area until confirmation is received by VCUHS that the individual is drug/alcohol free.

PATIENT SAFETY

Patient safety should be taken into consideration in all our interactions with patients, including factoring in the patient's age and medical condition in response to the activity being required. As you begin your rotation, ask the staff in your assigned area what special safety precautions should be implemented based on equipment used, hazards in the area and measures used specifically to protect the unique patient population on that unit.

UNUSAL OCCURRENCE REPORTING

As part of our patient safety and performance improvement initiatives, any unusual occurrence that you witness or experience while serving your student rotation should be reported to a VCUHS staff member so they may accurately record it in our Patient Safety Net. This reporting mechanism is used to assess patient and staff risk exposure so appropriate action can be taken to eliminate or reduce risks in the future.

INFECTION CONTROL

Being a healthcare environment, patients are admitted with a variety of contagious pathogens. To provide the safest environment possible, VCUHS fully supports the standards established by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Standard Precautions must be practiced by all individuals coming in contact with patients.

In general, the following principles should be observed in caring for patients:

- Avoid eating and drinking in areas where there is potential exposure to blood and body fluids
- Do not use mouth pipetting
- Do not store food, medications, and specimens in the same place (e.g., refrigerator)
- Do not manipulate, bend, recap, or remove used needles.

- Replace sharps containers when approximately 3/4 full
- Use tongs or dustpan and broom to pick up broken glass
- Place all linen in fluid resistant (impervious) linen bags
- Dispose of infectious waste (any material or item contaminated with blood or body fluids, sharps, pathological and microbiological waste) in red biohazard bags or sharps container
- Place specimen containers into a clear plastic, resealable bag
- Promptly clean up small blood/body fluid spills (per Infection Control manual)
- Contact Environmental Services to handle large blood/body fluid spills
- Clean and disinfect all equipment and surfaces that come in contact with blood and body fluids as specified in Infection Control policy manual (found on intranet)
- Use appropriate hand hygiene to include washing hands
 - Before and after patient contact
 - After handling potentially contaminated items
 - After removal of gloves
 - Before eating
 - After going to the restroom
 - After blowing your nose/coughing/sneezing
 - Before inserting or removing contact lenses
 - After handling trash

Proper Hand Washing Technique:

If hands are visibly soiled:

1. Moisten hands under running water
2. Apply soap
3. Lather applying friction for 15 seconds
4. Clean between fingers and nails
5. Rinse well
6. Use paper towel to turn off faucets

Use alcohol hand rinse when hands are not visibly soiled:

1. Apply one pump of product
2. Rub hands with friction until hands are dry

CATEGORIES OF PRECAUTIONS

The following categories of precautions are used in addition to Standard Precautions when indicated:

AIRBORNE PRECAUTIONS – used to prevent diseases transmitted by the airborne route (droplet nuclei or contaminated dust particles).

DROPLET PRECAUTIONS- used to prevent diseases transmitted by infectious droplets (large-particle droplets that do not remain suspended in the air).

CONTACT PRECAUTIONS – used to prevent diseases transmitted by direct touch (touching the patient) or indirect (touching surfaces or objects in the patient’s environment) contact.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

When caring for patients needing special precautions, wear appropriate devices to protect you and others from exposure including goggles, gowns, gloves, and masks. Before caring for patients with airborne or droplet precautions, you need to be fitted for a protective mask. Contact staff in Environmental Health and Safety at 828-0118.

ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

Volunteer Services and the Hospital Hospitality House

Volunteer Services recruits, trains and supervises adult, college student and teen volunteers in the hospitals and clinics. The Volunteer Services staff works closely with Patient Relations to help in any way possible to make the hospital experience better for patients and their families. Volunteer Services tries to keep a supply of books, magazines, games, art supplies and videos which staff are welcome to pick up for their patients. Usual office hours are 8:00 am – 4:30 pm, and the office is located on Main 1 behind the Espresso Oasis Coffee Shop.

The Hospital Hospitality House, a non-profit volunteer-run hotel, is located at the corner of 7th Street and Marshall. Families of patients may stay there for a nominal fee. Transportation is provided between the hospitals and HHH. For more information about the Hospital Hospitality House, visit the desk on Gateway 1 in Admissions.

Guest Relations

The Guest (Patient) Relations Department, located on Gateway 1, is available to assist in the resolution of patient issues. If a patient has a complaint, he/she should first attempt to resolve it directly with the department; however, if resolution is not forthcoming, the Guest Relations Department is available to assist the patient and his/her family in addressing the issue toward a positive outcome. The Guest Relations Department can be contacted by calling 628-0400.

Pastoral Care Department

The Department of Pastoral Care is available 24-hours a day to provide spiritual care and assistance with religious practices to patients, family and staff. For Pastoral Care assistance call 828-0928.

VCUHS Policies and Procedures

This booklet provides only a glimpse into the policies, procedures and practices at VCU Health System. Details regarding the above issues and more can be found in the VCUHS Policies and Procedures Manual located on our intranet. In addition to organization wide policies and procedures, you can also find the Nursing Policy and Procedure Manual, the Infection Control Manual, Safety Policies and Medical Staff Bylaws on the intranet.

Medical Staff

If you need to find out information on a particular physician's credentialing status and privileges, you can find this on-line on our intranet under Clinical Care. Each physician and his/her specialty for privileges are identified.

CONCLUSION

We hope that you find this information helpful in both preparing for and completing your student rotation at VCU Health System. We are one of the leading employers in the Richmond area and offer a wide variety of career opportunities for consideration. When you complete your training, please contact us again at 628-0918 about job opportunities at VCUHS.

If you have questions regarding this handbook, call 628-9434.