

ZERO TOLERANCE

Boundaries, Abuse, Neglect & Exploitation

2016

DEFINITIONS

“ZERO TOLERANCE”

The policy and practice of not tolerating undesirable behavior.

“BOUNDARIES”

Rules which govern the relationship that a healthcare employee has with a patient.

- A therapeutic relationship is not the same as a social relationship or “friendship.”
- How you relate to patients must be within the scope and practice of your job responsibilities and limited to a planned, structured, and therapeutic treatment program for the patient.

ZERO TOLERANCE

Acadia Healthcare does not tolerate any action which can be construed as abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

ANY employee guilty of patient abuse, neglect, or exploitation will be terminated in accordance with facility HR policies and reported to the identified authorities.

Acadia's liability insurance will not cover employees in the event the employee is found guilty of sexual misconduct or any abuse with a patient.

ANY employee who fails to report an incident of patient abuse, neglect, or exploitation is subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

TYPES OF BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS

⊗ Self-Disclosure ⊗

Avoid disclosing unnecessary/non-therapeutic personal information about yourself.

Telling a patient about your own personal problems or work issues.

Giving a patient your home phone number, address, email, Facebook, Twitter, other social media/contact info.

Revealing your personal attraction to a patient (also known as Countertransference).

⊗ Dual Relationships ⊗

When staff already have a personal relationship of some kind with the patient outside of treatment.

Especially when that relationship carries emotional or financial power over the patient.

Staff should never treat their own family members or friends.

Supervisors should never do “therapy” with subordinates.

⊗ Physical Contact/Touching ⊗

Physical contact should be appropriate to the patient population.

Physical contact which could be interpreted by the patient as affectionate or sexual must be avoided.

⊗ Becoming Personal Friends ⊗

Having a FAVORITE patient.

Keeping secrets with a patient.

Business dealings with current or former patients (includes services like plumbing or landscaping, as well as direct marketing selling or purchasing of cosmetics, health/wellness products, jewelry, home/cooking products, etc.).

WHAT IS ABUSE?

The willful infliction by a caretaker of physical pain or injury, or the willful deprivation of services necessary to the physical safety of an individual.

MENTAL / PSYCHOLOGICAL

Acts that inflict emotional harm, invoke fear and/or humiliate, intimidate, degrade, demean or otherwise negatively impact the mental health or safety of an individual.

- *Derogatory, threatening, belittling, humiliating, or profane or obscene language toward a patient*
- *Physical intimidation*

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Acts of assault/battery.

- *Assaultive behavior physically*
- *Putting a patient in a seclusion or restraint (lack of freedom) without justification of imminent danger to self or others*
- *Pushing, hitting, slapping, or striking a patient*

VERBAL ABUSE

The use of offensive and/or intimidating language that can provoke or upset an individual.

- *Cursing/ verbally threatening a patient.*
- *Cursing/ verbally threatening in front of a patient even if not directed toward the patient.*
- *Verbally criticizing a patient and family.*

SEXUAL ABUSE: Acts of a sexual nature between patients and staff

Sexual activity with a patient is the most serious and destructive type of boundary violation and is abuse !!!

Any sexual activity or sexualized behavior with patients is unacceptable and harmful !!!

There is NO consensual sex between staff and adult patients.

This applies to ALL employees: housekeeping, marketing, billing office, direct care employees, etc.

- ❖ *Any sexual behavior, comments, or actions including flirting***
- ❖ *Dating current or former patients***

What is Neglect & Exploitation?

⇒ ⇒ ⇒ **NEGLECT** ⇐ ⇐ ⇐

Any circumstance which results from leaving unfinished or unattended one's duties and responsibilities for patient care which endangers a patient's life or development or impairs the patient's functioning.

- ❖ Failure to care or act within your scope of practice and job duties (this may also be a licensure violation)
- ❖ Non compliance or falsification of required safety checks, hygiene or medical interventions
- ❖ Not offering meals/snacks to a patient as dietary requests/orders
- ❖ Denial of basic needs such as nutrition, food, water, shelter, clothes
- ❖ Leaving/forgetting a patient in a vehicle
- ❖ Dropping off a minor patient at door without seeing the caregiver or the patient enter the residence
- ❖ Failure to provide sun screen for patients before they start their day which includes being outside

⇒ ⇒ ⇒ **FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION** ⇐ ⇐ ⇐

The theft or misappropriation of property and/or monetary resources which are intended to be used for or by an individual.

- ❖ Theft of patient property or money even posed as "gifts"

HARMFUL CONSEQUENCES

Boundary violations may result in harmful consequences to the patient!

These may include but are not limited to:

- Shame, fear, or rage
- Guilt and self-blame
- Isolation and emptiness, disengagement from services
- Identity confusion
- Loss of trust and damage to self esteem
- Self-harm
- Suicide

IT IS NEVER APPROPRIATE TO...

- ✓ Hit a patient
- ✓ Yell at a patient
- ✓ Use curse words with a patient
- ✓ Use insulting gestures such as rolling eyes at a patient
- ✓ Give a patient unkind nicknames (in front of or away from the patient)
- ✓ Not properly keep a patient clean
- ✓ Visit the patient in their room casually or not as per policy/protocol
- ✓ Allow others to bully a patient
- ✓ Withhold food or medication from a patient
- ✓ Take patient property
- ✓ Have social contact with patients or families outside of the scope of work
- ✓ Provide transportation to patients or families in personal vehicles
- ✓ Share personal information or problems with patients or families
- ✓ E-mail, phone, text and access patient and/or family personal websites or via social media
- ✓ Directly receive gifts of significant monetary value from patients and families
- ✓ Share religious or political beliefs with patients or families
- ✓ Enter into business relationships with patients or families

CONCLUSION

- ➔ There is “**Zero Tolerance**” for abuse.
- ➔ Provide care to patients without preferential treatment.
- ➔ Maintain professional/therapeutic boundaries.
- ➔ Be in full compliance with policies.
- ➔ Report and investigate suspected policy infractions immediately.
- ➔ Understand potential consequences of personal actions.
- ➔ It is the obligation of the caregiver to make the patient feel respected and safe. We will not accept any less from Acadia staff at any level of the organization.