CENTRAL IOWA HEALTH SYSTEM
GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

POLICY ON TRANSTIONS OF CARE

I. Purpose:

Transitions of care are critical elements in patient safety and must be organized such that complete and accurate clinical information on all involved patients is transmitted between the outgoing and incoming individuals and/or teams responsible for that specific patient group of patients. Sponsoring institutions and their programs must have documented processes in place for ensuring the effectiveness of transitions.

II. Definitions:

Transitions of care – the transfer of information, authority and responsibility during the transitions in care across the continuum for the purpose of ensuring the continuity and safety of the patient's care.

III. Procedures:

A. Each residency program will design clinical assignments to minimize the number of transitions in patient care and there should be documentation of the process involved.
B. Each residency program will ensure that residents are competent in communicating with team members in the hand-over process.
C. Each residency program will review its transitions of care policy and the monitoring of that policy in its annual report to the DIO and GMEC.
D. The DIO and GMEC will ensure and monitor effective, structured hand-over processes to facilitate both continuity of care and patient safety. Program Directors and faculty will be responsible for direct observation and evaluation of resident-to-resident handoffs.
E. The GMEC will ensure the availability of schedules that inform all members of the health care team of attending physicians and residents currently responsible for each patient's care.
F. Handoff processes should include at least: Patient summary (exam findings, laboratory data, any clinical changes); Assessment of illness severity; Code status; Active issues (including pending studies); Family contacts (as necessary); and any changes in responsible attending physician.
G. Hand-offs should occur at a fixed time and place each day and use a standard verbal or written template.

IV. Educational Resources:

A list of resources is available in the DIO's office to assist each program in the development of a hand-off procedure.

Approved by the Graduate Medical Education Committee on December 8, 2020; October 11, 2022; December 10, 2024

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