

OBSERVER POLICY with MEDICAL AFFAIRS/CREDENTIALS

Hamilton Health Sciences/St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton

A. PURPOSE:

To provide guidelines to support observership placements for individuals who are requesting to gain knowledge and expertise about health care and/or services within a healthcare organization. This may involve the opportunity to observe specific procedures and/or patient care processes.

B. OBSERVERS:

Inclusions:

Fees Applicable

- IMG'S - who have been accepted to McMaster Postgraduate program
- IMG'S - who have completed the Medical Council of Canada QE1 examination
- Other Healthcare Practitioners, which include MD's from outside of Canada; and Non MD's from Canada or elsewhere

Fees NOT Applicable

- Canadian based actively practicing physicians

Exclusions:

- ALL Medical Students Cdn / US / Overseas - should be supported through electives program
- ALL Residents Cdn / US/Overseas - should be supported through electives program
- Recruits in Process & wanting to observe while paperwork/appt is finalized
- Undergraduate and other students: Option: Hospital Job Shadow Policy - eligibility requirements are set out by the department handling these requests at the respective hospital *OBGyn does not allow UG observerships.*

C. DEFINITIONS:

An Observer is not considered an employee of the Hospital and therefore is not:

- Entitled to salary, benefits, reimbursement of expenses or other forms of compensation
- Covered under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB)
- Covered under the organization's liability insurance
- Entitled to receive educational credit or certification from the organization for time spent observing
- Entitled to access to Occupational Health Services

Role of an Observer:

An Observer is not permitted, in any circumstances, to provide any patient care. This prohibition includes but is not limited to:

- Taking a medical history,
- Conducting physical examinations,
- Diagnosing or treating patient's conditions,
- Ordering, preparing or administering drugs,
- Documenting on patients' health records, either in electronic or hard copy format,
- Having independent access to health records, either in electronic or hard copy format,
- Performing or assisting in surgical procedures, or diagnostic patient interventions,
- Obtaining consent,
- Interacting directly with patient/SDM,
- Providing health care advice.

DOCUMENTATION:

Documentation Required To Request Observership:

- Completed Observer Request Form (Appendix A)
- Statement of Agreement and Acknowledgment of Role & Responsibilities (Appendix B)
- Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix C)
- Completion of PRE-EMPLOYMENT HEALTH FORM (Appendix D) and all requirements, officially translated, if not in English
- Up to date Curriculum Vitae
- Copy of Degree – officially translated, if not in English
- Passport size photo
- All internal Hospital Approvals (Appendix E)
- Completed Observer Application Fee Form – for full period of Observership requested (Appendix F)

Note: Observership appointments are for a period of up to 4 weeks (1 month), renewable to a maximum of 12 weeks (3 months)

Observers are expected to arrange their own:

- accommodations during their visit
- health insurance
- liability coverage
- automobile insurance

E. POLICY:

Observers and Patient Interaction/ Sponsor:

- If the Observer will be present during any contact with a patient/SDM [substitute decision maker], prior to the Observer being present with the Sponsor individually or as part of a teaching group, the Sponsor must request verbal consent from the patient/SDM prior to any patient interaction
 - If the Observer is participating with the Sponsor as part of a teaching group, the consent obtained for the group will include the Observer; however
 - If the Observer is the only individual with the Sponsor, the Sponsor is to obtain individual patient consent.

To Remember:

- The Sponsor will introduce the Observer to the patient/SDM and explain the reason for the Observership.
- The Sponsor will document patient/SDM consent in the patient's health record.
- Verbal consent is required from the patient/SDM to attend rounds or team meetings where patient care is discussed, and documented in the patient's health record.
- Observers are not to view the patient's health care record under any circumstances.

The individual approving the Observership must consider whether the Observership is consistent with and based on:

- The mission and values of the organization,
- Ensuring the safety of the patient or the patient's Substitute Decision Maker (SDM),
- Respecting and maintaining the privacy of the patient and his/her family,
- Protecting the confidentiality of patient information and confidential business information of the organization.

All Observers must be partnered with an Active member of the Professional Staff/Sponsor, who is responsible for the supervision and safety of the individual participating at all times.

Termination of Observership

- HHS/SJHH may terminate an Observership at any time at its sole discretion. Concerns regarding the appropriateness of the Observer will be addressed by the Sponsor and, if necessary, by the Sponsoring Department Chief.

