

Obtaining Consent for Non-Medical Observers

To safeguard our patients and their health information while continuing our work as an Academic Medical Institution, the Seton Healthcare Family recently approved Policy 1000.29, "Obtaining Consent for Non-Medical Observers." This new policy ensures that non-staff observing patient care in any Seton facility are properly trained and escorted and also have approval from the patient.

Policy Highlights

- Observers must be at least 18 years of age.
- Prior to approval for observation, all observers must participate in, complete and sign:
 - the required HIPAA* orientation and observer training,
 - required Joint Commission immunizations,
 - background checks, and
 - the appropriate forms.
- The unit director or designee must approve each observer prior to observation.
- Each observer must have a sponsor.
 - The sponsor must be a Seton associate or physician medical staff member and is responsible for the observer and accompanies them during their observations.
 - The sponsor must sign a "Sponsor Accountability Attestation."
 - The sponsor must inform patient of purpose of the observer's presence outside of the presence of the observer and ask if the patient consents to observation.
- The patient must sign the Patient Rights form allowing an observer to observe. If the patient **does not sign or verbally refuses**, the observation is not permitted.
- Observational experiences may be terminated without cause at any time by any of the involved parties.

For this policy to be successful, it must be enforced by all Seton associates and members of Seton's medical staff. Please ensure your colleagues and staff are aware of these requirements.

Please direct inquiries to Kim Kass at kmkass@seton.org or (512) 324-5683.

Note: *This policy does not apply to medical observers covered by an affiliation agreement, the media or vendors. For more information, see Vendor Representative Access Policy 1000.13 and Media Relations Policy 5000.04.*