

Medical records entries must be dated and timed

By Maddie Pimenta, CPHQ, System Director for Quality

A reminder from the Quality Resources Department; - according to federal regulations, all entries in the medical record must be dated and timed. If members of the medical staff have any questions, they should contact me at (781) 979-3461.

Also, below are ten key tips for physicians to be aware of during a visit from the Joint Commission.

- Wear your Hallmark Health ID badge and have it visible at all times.
- A surveyor may ask you a question. Be polite and smile. If you do not know the answer, do not guess. You can ask to have it rephrased for clarification, or say where you would go to find the answer.
- Always wash your hands entering and leaving patient rooms and after removing gloves.
- Know your responsibility for Codes, such as Code 99 (medical emergency), Code Red (fire), Code Divert (all MDs to ED), Code Pink (infant abduction) and Code Alert (disaster).
- Sign all telephone orders within 24 hours, including those that are in the CPOE system.
- Know the National Patient Safety Goals, especially time out for invasive procedures, communication processes, the medication reconciliation process, orange items for fall risk patients and the CAT team process.
- Know how care is coordinated by a multi-disciplinary team and how you participate.
- Range orders must only specify either dose or frequency, but NOT both.
- Maintain patient confidentiality by not openly discussing a case or leaving patient information or medical records open at work areas.
- Know how to report safety concerns, clinical concerns, sentinel events and variations from the routine that are a potential risk.

Renovated Cummings Unit at MWH welcomes new patients

The Cummings Orthopaedic Surgery Unit on Med 5 of Melrose-Wakefield Hospital has been refurbished and renovated over the summer to provide enhanced care and comfort for patients undergoing bone and joint procedures.

According to **Deborah Cronin-Waelde, RN, ONC**, Director of the Cummings Unit, improvements to the area will also enhance staff work flow and efficiency. The area saw a complete renovation with new wall coverings added in more subdued restful hues, updated lighting for a more soothing ambience that still provides sufficient illumination for staff, new artwork and other amenities for a more pleasant stay.

Most of the patient rooms are now private on the Cummings Unit. Total joint replacement patients will have private rooms for their comfort and convenience as they advance through the recovery process.

The new unit offers many new features including a new medication room that utilizes a computerized medication system that helps to

significantly reduce any possibility of a medication error. The room also increases efficiency for nursing staff since the medications, IV's and supplies are now stored in one centralized location for ease in distribution.

New work areas with computer terminals specifically for physician use were added to the unit.

"The new renovation improves on what already was a great floor," explains **Mark Berenson, MD**, Chief of Orthopaedics at MWH, "Our patients love being on this floor that is staffed with an experienced nursing team that specializes in orthopaedics and works exceedingly well together. These enhancements should significantly improve the comfort for our patients and make it even easier to provide excellent care."

Cronin-Waelde also points out, "All of the renovation work on the floor was performed by the dedicated Hallmark Health maintenance staff and they certainly provided the extra touches that will ensure patient and staff satisfaction."

Professional Review uses new approaches to ensure quality of care

Last year, Hallmark Health introduced system-wide changes to its quality and safety programs. Among these was a restructured professional review process that brings a fresh approach to quality of care priorities. The process also recognizes and standardizes best practices throughout the system.

Under the co-direction of **Dean Pappas, MD** and **Steve Sbardella, MD**, this process seeks to engage the medical staff in quality initiatives, while standardizing the review process and maintaining greater accountability and coordination of care.

Dr. Sbardella explains that the professional review committee is comprised of physicians, representatives from hospital administration, nursing and risk management. The committee has tackled a number of key issues including establishing expected

standards of care, standardizing review processes, engaging members of the medical staff in quality initiatives and setting behavior policies for physicians and staff.

"We are seeking to create a consistency of care throughout the system," Dr. Sbardella explains. "The main objective of the work we do is educational as we strive to establish the highest level of care and consistency throughout the Hallmark Health system."

For more information on the Professional Review Committee, please contact Dr. Sbardella at (781) 979-3635, or Dr. Pappas at (781) 306-6884.



Steve Sbardella, MD

Hallmark Health Medical Center celebrates second successful year

The Hallmark Health Medical Center recently celebrated its second successful year of service. Since opening in July, 2007, the Medical Center has served more than 55,000

patients and performed approximately 25,000 diagnostic procedures. Services offered continue to expand and new technologies have been added to meet the growing needs of patients.

The Hallmark Health Medical Center is a modern facility designed for patient comfort and clinical quality. The Center features imaging services that include X-Ray, CAT Scan, ultrasound, bone densitometry and digital mammography. A full-service physical therapy suite and blood draw station are also on site.

The Center also houses a number of medical offices that offer specialty care in areas such as internal medicine and family practice, cardiology, obstetrics and gynecology, podiatry, pediatrics and gastroenterology. The Medical Center serves patients from Reading, North Reading, Lynnfield, Stoneham and Wakefield but also reaches out to other communities.

Helen Woods, Director of Center, is very proud of the high quality health care offered at the site and the highly skilled and dedicated staff. Woods said the Medical Center's location is a big plus for local residents and offers just as much, if not more, than any other outpatient facility in the area.

"What sets us apart is our community approach to medicine," Woods says. "We have a strong commitment to personalized care, which makes us a leader in patient satisfaction. We are in the community and want to continue to reinforce the importance of providing local access to health care to area residents."

IMAGING TIP OF THE MONTH

An important clarification on kyphoplasty

By **Wayne Wivell, MD**

Section Chief - Interventional Radiology

Two studies were recently published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, (August 6, 2009) which suggested that vertebroplasty is no more effective than a "sham" procedure.

The following clarification is necessary to avoid confusion with a similar but distinct procedure performed at Hallmark Health System, kyphoplasty. Kyphoplasty is a procedure that has strong supportive studies in the literature and has proven to be beneficial to patients in over 300 cases that have been performed at Hallmark Health.

Since 2006, our interventional radiology team (myself, **Coralli So, MD** and **Neil Denbow, MD**) have treated appropriate patients with vertebral compression fractures exclusively with kyphoplasty, a procedure distinct from vertebroplasty. Kyphoplasty includes the use of balloons and curette devices which contribute to height restoration and allow for much greater control and installation of greater volumes of viscous "thicker" cement.

Physicians who have had patients undergo kyphoplasty are well aware of its high success rate. At Hallmark Health we have found that approximately 90 % of patients have immediate and significant pain relief, thus making it one of the most rewarding procedures we perform.

Please feel free to contact me, with any patient questions or concerns at (781) 979-6905.

WELCOME NEW PHYSICIANS

Leonard I. Firer, MD, has joined Revere Winthrop Pediatrics, 280 Beach St., in Revere. He is a graduate of the Leningrad Pediatric Medical Institute. His phone number is (781) 289-5057.



Josh Stern, MD, recently joined Mystic Valley Urological Associates in Stoneham. Dr. Stern attended Cornell University Medical College and completed his Internship at Mount Sinai Medical Center. He did residencies at Tufts Medical Center and the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Dr. Stern also completed a Fellowship at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania.



Michael Tameo, MD, is a vascular surgeon who has recently joined Commonwealth Surgical Associates, 91 Montvale Ave., in Stoneham. He is a graduate of the Saba University of Medicine and held a fellowship in vascular surgery at Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia, PA. His phone number is (781) 279-1123.



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