

HOW TO HANDLE PATIENT TRANSFERS TO THE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
FROM OUTSIDE PHYSICIANS AND OTHER HOSPITALS

The transfer of patients from an outside physician's office or another healthcare facility is a two-step process and is initiated when the hospital has at least 8 empty beds. The Regional Medical Center at Memphis (the MED) serves patients from Shelby County and insured patients who live outside of Shelby County, including TLC patients. In addition, interesting "teaching cases" and transfers for medical necessity may be accepted. Even though a patient may be acceptable to the institution, each patient must have a physician willing to assume responsibility for their care once the transfer has been affected. Physician acceptance for the Medicine Service may be made either by the Chief of Service (Dr. Morrison) or **the attending physician of the on-call team**. For TLC direct admit patients, MEDCall will notify the internal medicine physician on call that a bed is available in the MED, and the MED physician will call the referring physician.

When speaking to the referring physician, it is important to determine the level of care the patient is receiving at the sending hospital, is the patient stable enough to be transferred, and will transportation be provided. Neither the Regional Medical Center nor UTMG are able to provide transportation from outlying hospitals to the MED.

- (1) Does the patient need to continue to be in the hospital? Sometimes patients can be better cared for in outpatient facilities.
- (2) Is the patient stable for transfer?
- (3) Is transportation available? (TLC will provide transportation for TLC direct admits.)
- (4) Will all necessary information accompany the patient (medical records, X-rays, lab reports, etc.) at the time of the transfer?
- (5) If the requested transfer is appropriate, collect the following information:
 - a. patient's name
 - b. patient's medical record number at referring hospital
 - c. name and telephone number of referring hospital
 - d. name and pager number of referring physician
- (6) For non-TLC patients, inform the referring physician that the MED will contact the referring hospital to assure patient eligibility for care at the MED, collect demographic and other information, and initiate the transfer process.
- (7) Also for non-TLC patients, contact Bed Control (545-7133) with patient's name and other information. They will contact the referring hospital and, if all is in order, will initiate the patient transfer. Bed Control will contact you should there be a problem.
- (8) Contact the housestaff team, including the attending on that team who will be covering the hospital at the time of the patient's arrival. Give them the telephone number and/or beeper number of the referring physician so that they can contact this physician if necessary.
- (9) It may be wise for the accepting resident to contact the charge nurse of the ward to which the patient will arrive and discuss this with her and give her your beeper number for notification of arrival.
- (10) We do not directly admit patients from other EDs.
- (11) For practical reasons, we should never accept patient transfers at night.
- (12) We do not transfer to the MED's Emergency Department referred patients who are already in a bed at another hospital.

Robert E. Morrison, M.D.
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