

<b>Responsible Department:</b> Patient Care	<b>YALE NEW HAVEN HEALTH POLICY &amp; PROCEDURES</b>
<b>Title:</b> Handoff Communication and Transfer of Care	
<b>Date Effective:</b> 11/19/2021	
<b>Approved by:</b> Joint Clinical and Operations Council	
<b>System Policy Type (I or II):</b> Type I	

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish standardized processes that guide the method and content of information exchanged between caregivers at YNHHS when transferring direct patient care responsibilities.

## APPLICABILITY

This policy applies across Yale New Haven Health (YNHHS) licensed hospital entities, including Bridgeport Hospital, Greenwich Hospital, Lawrence + Memorial Hospital, Westerly Hospital, Yale New Haven Hospital, and any other hospital that affiliates with YNHHS, and each of their subsidiary entities.

## DEFINITIONS

- A. Caregiver** – individual who provides direct care, treatment, or services to patients.
- B. Patient Handoff** – a transfer of information between caregivers.
- C. Handoff Communications** – a real time, interactive process of communicating patient-specific information for the purpose of ensuring continuity, safety of the patient’s care, and optimal outcomes.
- D. Interactive** – process that permits questions to be asked and answered. Note, this is not necessarily face-to-face; however, with a written handoff, the potential must exist to identify the caregivers who are most familiar with the patient and can answer questions by the individual who receives the patient. At a minimum, this contact information would include a name and method to contact.

## POLICY

- A.** Handoff communications are to include accurate information about patient status (including isolation status as relevant), current and anticipated treatment, and any recent or anticipated changes in condition.
- B.** Handoff communications are to be interactive and allow for questions to be asked and answered.
- C.** Handoff communications may be verbal, written, faxed, or electronic. The receiver of the handoff information has the opportunity to review relevant patient information.

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- D.** The handoff is an interactive process among the healthcare team.
- E.** SBAR is a communication tool available for use during handoffs. It is designed to structure and facilitate communications between healthcare providers. SBAR includes the following elements:
1. Situation – What is happening now? Chief complaints; acute changes
  2. Background – What factors led up to the event? Vital signs; pertinent history
  3. Assessment – What do you see? What do you think is going on?
  4. Recommendation – What action do you propose? What do you need from the person you are communicating with?

### PROCEDURES

N/A

### REFERENCES

The Joint Commission Hospital Accreditation Manual (July 2021). Provision of Care – PC.02.02.01.

### RELATED POLICIES

N/A

### POLICY HISTORY

A. Policy Origin Date	03/2015
B. Supersedes	LMH: Communication of Patient Status at Time of Transfer from One Care Setting to Another WH: Handoff Communication and Transfer of Care YNHH: Hand Off Policy (C:H-3) YNHHS: Clinical Transitions of Care Handoff Communication
A. Approved with Revisions	03/2015; 12/17/2018
B. Approved without Revisions	11/19/2021