



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY
2480 LLEWELLYN AVENUE
FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MARYLAND 20755-5800

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

30 July 2004

POLICY STATEMENT NO. 19

COMMAND ETHICS POLICY

1. Reference: DoD 5500.7-R, August 1993, Joint Ethics Regulation (JER).
2. Purpose. The purpose of this policy is to remind the personnel of this Command of their ethical responsibilities toward the patients and community we serve, as well as to other members of the staff. It is everyone's responsibility to treat all individuals fairly and with the respect and consideration they deserve, and to act in a manner that is consistent with this policy. This policy is applicable to all military and civilian personnel assigned to or contracted by this medical department activity (MEDDAC).
3. Governing Principles. The behavior of this MEDDAC's personnel will be governed by the principle that all individuals deserve to be treated with honesty, integrity and respect. In support of this principle, all MEDDAC personnel will—
 - a. Fairly and accurately represent themselves and their abilities.
 - b. Provide services to meet the identified needs of our patients to the extent possible and within resource limitations.
 - c. Adhere to a uniform standard of care throughout the Command, based upon patient needs.
 - d. Provide medical care only to those patients who can be safely cared for within the medical treatment facility (MTF), and those in need of stabilization prior to being transported; arrange for the transport of patients to other military or civilian MTFs whenever a higher level of medical care is required.
4. Respect other people. Treat all patients, visitors and members of the staff with courtesy and respect. Make every effort to treat patients in a manner recognizing and respecting their individual backgrounds, genders, religions and heritages. To the greatest extent possible, welcome patient and family involvement in decisions regarding the care we provide as well as therapeutic alternatives and the risks associated with the care they are seeking. Try to understand and respect their concerns with treatment plan. Inform patients of their right of informed decision making, including their right to execute advance medical directives.
5. Resolution of conflicts. I recognize that conflict may occur among those participating in administrative and patient care decisions. Strive to resolve all conflicts fairly and objectively with your supervisor. If difficulties arise in finding a mutually satisfying resolution, ask for the assistance of the Patient Representative or a technical expert in the area of contention.
6. Recognition and resolution of potential conflicts of interest. Prevention of conflicts of interest is the best policy; strive to eliminate any possibility for conflicts of interest in the workplace. However, if a potential conflict of interest does arise, it will be reviewed by the Executive Committee or its designated representative, if deemed appropriate. If a potential conflict of interest has a direct implication on patient care, the clinic may

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Subject: Policy Statement No. 19 – Command Ethics Policy

apply to the Deputy Commander for Clinical Services for intervention by the Ethics Committee to assist in resolving the issue.

7. Corporate Compliance. We will conduct business with the highest level of ethical behavior and in compliance with applicable governing laws, rules and regulations. We are committed to preventing non-compliance, and promptly identifying and correcting any non-compliant situation.

8. Fair billing practices. Clinics will invoice third party insurance carriers only for services actually provided to patients. Clinic personnel will direct patients to Patient Administration for assistance to patients seeking to understand the costs relative to their care. Always attempt to resolve questions and objections to the satisfaction of the patient.

9. Marketing. All marketing programs developed and implemented by the MEDDAC for the community at large will abide by the ethical standards of this policy and DoD Directive 5500.7-R, Joint Ethics Regulation (JER).

10. Vendor relationships. Choice of vendors and companies supplying the MEDDAC will be based on optimal price, product and delivery systems. Preferential treatment of vendors and companies in return for inducements is in contravention to the JER and will not be tolerated.

11. Confidentiality. Recognize the extreme need to maintain patient and other information in a confidential manner. As such, privileged information will be maintained in the strictest confidence. Access and use of such information is limited only to those individuals authorized to review and or act upon it. Patient information will only be transmitted over secure networks.

12. Professional Communication. I desire everyone within the Command to do his or her utmost to foster good working relationships with other health care organizations or networks and providers within the civilian community. I encourage the exchange of professional ideas and educational experiences among providers, administrators and educational institutions. Appropriate agreements and memoranda will be developed to permit sharing of resources, affiliation of personnel and technology transfer.

13. Commander's Intent. Ethical conduct means "doing the right thing even when no one is looking." Overall, the Command's commitment is to act with integrity in all of our activities and to treat employees, patients, health care providers, and the many constituents we serve with respect.



BILLIE J. MIELCAREK
COL, SP
Commanding

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