DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS OF EMPLOYEES*

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Policy:
It is the expectation that staff behave in a courteous, cooperative and professional manner to help promote a healthy workplace that is free of aggression, harassment and intimidation. Disruptive behaviors can interfere with the cooperation and free exchange of information that is necessary for the health care team to provide safe and effective patient care; undermine staff morale; make it difficult to recruit and retain qualified staff; harm our reputation; and expose the clinic and staff to legal liability.

UCSC Student Health Services (SHS) core values of teamwork, communication and respect require a workplace that is respectful for all. It is the responsibility of the SHS to provide staff with a safe, professional and cooperative working environment that allows safety and quality to thrive. Unprofessional conduct has the potential to adversely affect the quality of care delivered to patients by both the perpetrator and coworkers, and undermines our core values of respect for all persons. In order to facilitate a respectful workplace and adherence to safe work practices by all individuals at all times, the SHS will identify, document, and modify disruptive behaviors of its staff and where appropriate, refer to the management team for possible disciplinary action, including and up to termination of employment.

In order to have an environment that supports teamwork and respect for other people, SHS management demonstrates their commitment to quality and safe care by setting expectations for those who work at SHS.

Procedure:
Expectations: All behaviors and actions of SHC staff are consistent with UCSC Principles of Community and the SHC core values of:

- Teamwork– We work together with people who support common values and vision to achieve collective excellence in the services they provide
- Communication –We value clear, compassionate communications individuals responsibly contribute toward the creation of a healthy environment for all.
- Respect – We respect the dignity, diversity and individuality of all. This drives our effort to equitably meet the needs of the students, staff and the organization as a whole.

Additionally, we always act in a professional, respectful manner to enhance the spirit of cooperation, mutual respect and trust among the patient care team. And we address disagreements in a constructive, respectful manner privately and out of earshot of patients or other noninvolved caregivers.

Merely expressing contrary opinions is not disruptive conduct, nor is expressing concern or constructive criticism of inappropriate policies or procedures or unacceptable performance or conditions, if it is done in good faith, in an appropriate time, place and manner, and with the aim of improving the environment of care rather than personally attacking any individual.

Standards of Conduct: The Standards of Conduct provide specific guidelines for conduct that will be followed by all SHS Staff. The standards are not, however, all inclusive; individual behavior and/or conduct not specifically covered by these standards will be assessed on a case by case basis. Violations of the following standards will result in the collegial and educational efforts outlined in this and Staff Human Resources Policies to be used by SHS management in order to address conduct that does not meet this standard. Such behaviors may result in discipline, up to and including termination.
- Inappropriate touching or physical assault
- Sexual harassment or harassment against any individual on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical disability, marital status, sex, age, religion, or sexual orientation.
- Stalking others.
- Unauthorized possession, consumption or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages, narcotics or controlled substances on work time or premises.
- Threatening, vulgar, aggressive, intimidating, blaming, abusive, coercive, controlling, sabotaging and/or passive aggressive behaviors, including outbursts, and physical, verbal and non-verbal behaviors, toward, or in the presence of patients, visitors, or staff members.
- Throwing instruments or other objects.
- Difficulty working collaboratively with others. Non-constructive criticism addressed to a recipient in a way as to intimidate, demean, belittle, or infer incompetence.
- Public criticism of staff or patients or other inappropriate comments that undermine a patient’s trust in the healthcare team.
- Inappropriate comments or diagrams written in the medical record that impugn the quality of care of the SHS or attack particular staff or policy.
- Deliberate destruction or stealing of the organization’s property, including medical records.
- Knowingly making false statements about others or making false statements during any disciplinary investigation.
- Persistent complaining or use of sarcasm
- Imposing idiosyncratic requirements on staff, which have nothing to do with better patient care, but serve to burden staff.
- Making or threatening reprisals for reporting disruptive behavior.
- Insubordination, challenging or resisting authority or other disrespectful conduct.
- Inappropriate reaction to criticism of conduct or job performance
- Violation of safety or health rules.
- Possession of dangerous materials, such as explosives or firearms in the workplace.
- Refusal to abide by SHS work requirements, accept assignments and meet deadlines (including but not limited to medical records completion, and other patient care responsibilities, and an unwillingness to work cooperatively and harmoniously with other members of the staff)
- any impairment of judgement on the job due to being under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance or other drug may make the employee subject to discipline; see the UCSC Policy [1](http://apo.ucsc.edu/academic_policies_and_procedures/cappm/016000.htm)

**Reporting and Interventions:**

The SHS management team shall provide orientation and education to make employees aware of the policy requiring respectful, dignified conduct. The SHS management team will institute procedures to facilitate prompt reporting of conduct which may violate this Policy and prompt action. Any staff, patient, or visitor may report potential unprofessional behavior/violations of the standards of conduct.

Issues of employee conduct will be dealt with in accordance with the Staff Human Resources policy and may be reported to a member of the Management Team or Human Resources. Employees, patients, or visitors who observe, or are subject to, inappropriate conduct by a SHS staff member will notify a supervisor about the incident, the supervisor will notify the Executive Director (or designee). Events where an employee is subject to inappropriate conduct will in turn be communicated to Staff Human Resources as well. Any staff who observes such behavior by another staff must notify their supervisor directly.

**Documentation using an incident report will include:**

A. Name of the individual(s) involved in the questionable behavior.

B. Date and time of the questionable behavior.
C. A statement of whether the behavior affected or involved a patient in any way; and if so, the name or medical record number of the patient.

D. The circumstances that precipitated the action.

E. A description of the questionable behavior limited to factual, objective language.

F. The consequences, if any, of the disruptive behavior as it relates to patient care or the organization’s operations.

G. A record of any action taken to remedy the situation including date, time, place, action, and name(s) of those intervening.

The Executive Director will review the report with the appropriate SHS supervisor, and contact the individual who prepared it and/or any witnesses to the incident to ascertain the details of the incident. If it is determined that an incident of inappropriate conduct has occurred, there are several options available, including, but not limited to the following:

- notify the staff member that a complaint has been received and invite that staff member to provide more information about the event if he/she desires
- have the Executive Director and appropriate SHS supervisor meet with the staff member to counsel and educate the individual about the concerns and the necessity to modify the behavior in question. This may include developing a written voluntary action plan to help address the disruptive behavior via counseling memo.
- initiate corrective action including discipline up to and including termination.

These efforts are intended to be collegial, with the goal of being helpful to the staff member in understanding that certain conduct is inappropriate and unacceptable. These efforts can also be used to educate the staff member about administrative channels that are available for registering complaints or concerns about quality or services, if the staff member suggests that such concerns led to the behavior.

The identity of the individual reporting the incident will generally not be disclosed unless required for the staff member to provide an adequate response or as required by law.

However, in any case the staff member will be advised that any retaliation against the person reporting a concern will be grounds for immediate disciplinary action pursuant to the Staff Human Resources procedures.

A summary of efforts to address concerns with the staff member, as well as the agreed upon course of action for correction will be prepared by the SHS manager for the staff members file. Additionally the staff member will be given the opportunity to respond in writing. Any such response will be kept in the staff members file.

If additional complaints are received concerning a staff member, the Executive Director in consultation with appropriate SHS manager, may continue to use these collegial measures noted in this Policy as long as they believe that there is still a reasonable likelihood that those efforts will resolve the concerns.

**Key Points:**

Other Campus policies and websites

- [http://www2.ucsc.edu/title9-sh/sopolicy/index.htm](http://www2.ucsc.edu/title9-sh/sopolicy/index.htm) [2]
- [http://apo.ucsc.edu/academic_policies_and_procedures/cappm/016000.htm](http://apo.ucsc.edu/academic_policies_and_procedures/cappm/016000.htm) [1]
- [http://www.ucsc.edu/about/principles-community.html](http://www.ucsc.edu/about/principles-community.html) [4]