

# Code of Excellence

*Where Health and Care Come Together*



Christian Hospital • Northwest HealthCare

# Code of Excellence

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*The desire to go beyond what is asked or expected is a gift that rare individuals give their colleagues and their organization.*

*All things can be taught, but extra effort comes not from a book, but from the heart.*

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The Christian Hospital/Northwest HealthCare mission is to improve the health of the people in the communities we serve. Our vision is to be the healthcare provider of choice through delivery of high quality, compassionate care in a safe and positive environment. We will meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of our customers by compassionately delivering our knowledge and skills.

We have developed the following “Code of Excellence” with standards to guide us in providing excellent service that exceeds our customers’ expectations. The following standards, developed by employees across the organization, establish specific guidelines on how we will serve our customers.

Our customers are defined as patients, patients’ family members, significant others, physicians and their staff, outside representatives, visitors and fellow Christian Hospital/Northwest HealthCare employees.

As individuals and as a team we will exceed our customers’ expectations.



*"Watch your thoughts; they become words. Watch your words; they become actions. Watch your actions; they become habits. Watch your habits; they become character. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny."*

*~ Frank Outlaw*

# Attitude *Attitude is everything.*

- I will welcome customers and co-workers in a respectful and friendly manner, demonstrated by making eye contact, smiling and greeting those I encounter.
- I will treat everyone with respect.
- I will convey a positive attitude. I will not be rude or negative by using statements such as:
  - ~ “It’s not my job” instead say, “I’ll find someone to help you”
  - ~ “I didn’t do it” instead say, “I’ll make this right”
  - ~ “He/She is not my patient” instead say, “I’ll help!”
  - ~ “We are short staffed” instead say, “I’ll do whatever it takes”
  - ~ “I can’t wait for this day to be over” instead say, “It’s a good day”
- I will display pride in my workplace.
- Customers are not an interruption of my work; they are my reason for being here.
- I will always thank my customer for using our facility.
- I will bring any work-related concerns I may have to my supervisor or manager for discussion, rather than complaining/gripping to my colleagues.

Sixty percent of attitude is body language. Be mindful of your body language because it speaks louder than words.

There are many things in our lives over which we have little or no control, but we do have control over one very important quality: our attitude, which affects our actions and our words.

# Appearance *First impressions are lasting impressions.*

- I will dress as a professional. I will maintain 100 percent compliance with the Christian Hospital/Northwest HealthCare dress code policy.
- I will avoid attire that may be offensive to our customers.
- I will wear my employee badge with pride, chest high with my name facing front to be visible at all times.

- I will maintain good grooming habits and personal cleanliness at all times.
- I will wear perfumes, colognes or other scents in moderation due to possible allergic/asthmatic responses from my customers and co-workers.
- I will keep all visible tattoos covered at all times. I will not wear facial, tongue, or other piercings (excluding earrings) during work hours.
- I will keep my hair neat and clean. I will keep my beard and mustache trimmed and neat. My fingernails will be neat and clean, no acrylic nails for patient care providers and I will maintain the nail length appropriate for my job.

*You never get a second chance to make a first impression.*

## Communication

- I will communicate in a respectful manner at all times and will not use profanity in public places. This includes verbal and nonverbal communication.
- I will refer to patients as “Mr.,” “Mrs.,” or “Miss” unless they prefer to be addressed differently.
- I will not address anyone as “honey,” “sweetie,” “babe” or any like words.
- If a customer makes a request that I am unable to fulfill, I will ask for his or her patience and I will get someone who can help.
- I will not create rumors or make false statements.
- I will not participate in hostile, condemning or demeaning communications.
- I will take responsibility to obtain and read hospital communications as directed by my manager, i.e. emails, newsletters, etc.

### EMAIL ETIQUETTE:

- I will use email for business purposes only.
- I will not use upper case as that may be perceived as shouting.
- I will remember that face-to-face communication is always better than email.

## CUSTOMER INFORMATION AND EDUCATION:

- I will, whenever possible, use easy-to-understand and appropriate language when giving patients information through verbal or written instructions, educational handouts, videos, web sites, demonstrations or other written materials.
- I will address and ensure follow-up to any special needs for my customer, such as translation, language interpreters, amplification devices, close-captioned television for the hearing impaired and accommodations for customers with mental or physical disabilities.

## TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE:

- I am representing Christian Hospital/Northwest Healthcare. I will act in a manner that demonstrates I am professional, courteous and friendly.
- My tone of voice sets the stage. Before I answer the telephone, I will smile first, answer calls within three rings, ask if it will be alright to put the caller on hold and thank him/her for holding.
- I will answer the telephone courteously with “Thank you for calling Christian Hospital (or Northwest Healthcare),” my name is\_\_\_\_\_. “How may I help you?”
- I will not eat, drink or chew gum while speaking on the telephone.
- I will not use the speakerphone unless necessary. If a speakerphone must be used, I will ask for permission and inform the caller of who else is present in the listening area.
- When transferring calls, I will not transfer a call blindly. I will notify the receiving party of the call. I will provide the caller with the telephone number in case the call is lost. If the call is answered in voicemail, I will let the caller know and ask if they would like to leave a message or call back at a later time.
- My voicemail greeting will be short with no complex message.
- I will return all calls and voicemail messages as soon as possible.



*"Kind words can be short  
and easy to speak, but  
their echoes are truly  
endless."*

~ Mother Theresa

## CUSTOMER WAITING:

*Customer service is not a department; it is an attitude.*

- I will apologize to patients and their families for any delay, explaining the delay without making excuses or finger pointing.
- I will provide patients and families with updated information and engage the patient's care partner in the care of their loved one.

# Service Excellence

*A complaint from a customer is a gift. When a customer approaches us with a complaint, they are giving us the opportunity to improve.*

## IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE

- I will take time and listen with empathy.
- I will treat each customer as an individual, and respect their cultural and spiritual differences.
- I will adapt what I'm doing to meet our customers' needs.
- I will anticipate customers' needs for information and provide them with appropriate resources.
- I will look for ways to improve the experience.
- I will work with my supervisor and co-workers to set goals for improving the experience.
- I will play an integral part in supporting the health and well-being of our customers.

## HANDLING CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

- When an angry customer confronts me with a problem, I will stop what I am doing, maintain eye contact, empathize, and listen closely to what they are saying.
- I will allow the customer to voice their concern uninterrupted. I will not argue with the customer or become defensive. I will accept and acknowledge the customers' feelings.

- I will ask questions, take notes and gather as much information about the situation as possible. I will try to sort the emotion from the actual issue. I will apologize and express that I will do whatever it takes to resolve the situation. If I cannot handle the situation, I will escalate the concern to my superior and/or customer experience manager.
- I will not accept abuse from anyone. I will firmly tell the abusive customer that I am sincerely trying to help them but will not tolerate the abuse. If the abuse continues, I will politely terminate the conversation and notify my superior and/or customer experience manager.
- If I make a commitment to follow-up with the customer on a certain date or time, I will make sure I follow through.

**W**e are the Patient Experience

**E**mpower customers to express concerns/complaints and employees to resolve them

**C**ompassion begins with empathetic listening

**A**cknowledge by thanking them for bringing it to our attention

**R**espond by following through on promised resolution

**E**xcellence is achieved by doing all these things

## Call Lights/Response

*Your patient is linked to you!*

*We will exceed patient and family expectations for response to call lights and requests. We will answer call lights in a way that demonstrates the care, courtesy and respect our customers deserve.*

- At the first customer encounter, I will introduce myself, update the communication board in the room if applicable, explain the day's plan of care, instruct the patient on the call light and phone usage and ask if there is anything that I can do for him/her now.
- I will anticipate my patient's needs at all times.
- I will answer call lights in a positive manner and address the patient's needs within three minutes.
- Before exiting the patient's room I will assure the patient that I am available for future needs.

## ELEVATOR/HALLWAY Etiquette

- Patients and visitors have first priority to the elevator. If necessary, I will exit the elevator and make room.
- I will let others exit the elevator before I enter.
- When escorting a customer, I will hold the elevator door and allow the customer to enter and exit first.
- I will allow customers with disabilities to be near the elevator door.
- I will provide “wayfinding” services by escorting a patient to their destination, not just telling them how to get there.
- I will know where to locate wheelchairs for customer use.

## COMMITMENT TO Co-workers

***Co-Worker = Every fellow employee, volunteer or student from every department of Christian Hospital and Northwest HealthCare***

*A common mission and goal link us to one another.*

*Without everyone's contribution, none of us could perform our jobs.*

- I will welcome new employees. I will set an example of cooperation that is expected in the workplace.
- I will be 100 percent compliant with the attendance and tardy policy. I will begin performing my job duties at the time I am scheduled.
- I will be supportive of my co-workers. I will be a team player whenever possible without being asked.
- I will recognize that conflicts may exist among co-workers; however, professional courtesy is expected. I will set aside differences when working together and realize we are all different.
- I will not create unnecessary work for my fellow employees, i.e., I will pick up after myself; I will clean up as I go.
- I will treat other employees with dignity and respect, i.e., I will not talk down to any employee, confront them in front of others, raise my voice in anger or use offensive language.
- I will not create a hostile environment, i.e., slamming or throwing of objects in anger or disgust.



*"One of the deepest needs of all people is to be heard and understood."*

~ B.Dodge B. Cottrell

- I will have excellent communication with my co-workers.
- I will not use work time to take or make personal telephone calls. I will ask family and friends not to call unless it is an emergency.
- I will compliment those employees who adhere to the Standards of Excellence and I will coach those that do not without fear of retaliation.

## Privacy/Modesty *Maintaining Dignity*

- I will respect patients' privacy and modesty by knocking before entering a room.
- I will explain that I am closing the curtain for privacy.
- I will provide properly fitting patient attire.
- I will provide assurance and preserve patient dignity during procedures.
- I will ask visitors and family to leave the room during patient care interactions unless the patient indicates otherwise.
- I will not violate patients' privacy or confidentiality by speaking about them in a public place such as an elevator, open hallway or cafeteria.
- I will not share information in any form with anyone but those who have a need to know for professional reasons.

## Safety *Think safe, act safe, be safe and stay safe!*

Safety is the responsibility of all Christian Hospital/Northwest HealthCare employees.

- I will help provide a safe environment for my customers.
- I will read and follow all safety policies for the hospital and my department.
- If I see a safety hazard, I will correct it or report it immediately.
- I will know how to access Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).
- I will use proper lifting and body mechanics.
- I will know emergency codes and my role when these are announced.
- I will ask, follow and communicate isolation precautions.
- I will utilize proper patient identification in all patient encounters.

# Facility Appearance

*First impressions are everything!  
People make decisions about our organization by what they see.*

- I agree that the appearance of the facility is everyone's responsibility.
- I will treat hospital property and resources with care and respect.
- I will pick up and dispose of litter properly.
- I will keep my personal work areas and employee break areas clean.
- I will comply 100 percent with the facility smoking policy.
- I will only park in employee designated parking spaces, leaving prime parking spaces for our patients and visitors.

# Confidentiality

*The right thing to do and a legal mandate*

- I will follow HIPAA regulations and other professional, ethical requirements.
- I will direct requests for information from news media to the Communication/Marketing department, house supervisor or administrative personnel.
- I will direct requests for information about current or former employees to the Human Resources department. This includes all requests for references.



## Code of Excellence

*"The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence regardless of their chosen field of endeavor."*

~ Vince Lombardi

*(Complete form on other side)*

# Code of Excellence

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Dear Christian Hospital/Northwest HealthCare Employee:

Thank you for your commitment to providing excellent customer service. Please review the Code of Excellence and feel free to direct any questions to your supervisor or manager for clarification.

By signing this document, you are agreeing to take the necessary steps to be a leader in customer service.

*"The desire to go beyond what is asked or expected is a gift that rare individuals give their colleagues and their organization. All things can be taught, but extra effort comes not from a book, but from the heart."*

~ Unknown Author

My Signature below indicates that:

- ~ I have been given a copy of the Code of Excellence.
- ~ I have read and I understand the Code of Excellence.
- ~ I am committed to upholding the Code of Excellence.
- ~ I understand that failure to adhere to the Code of Excellence will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employee #: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Dept. \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



*"Expressing courtesy, compassion, respect and a friendly greeting should be your personal goal, every day."*

*~ The Christian Hospital Executive Team*

*Special thanks to the Alton Memorial Hospital/Eunice Smith Home employees for providing the initial guidelines for our Code of Excellence.*

