Policy and Procedure

Department: Emergency Preparedness	Section:	Subject: Code White - Violent Person
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POLICY

The purpose of the Code White policy and procedure is to assist Espanola Regional Hospital & Health Centre staff in responding to episodes where individuals become violent and/or display behaviour which threatens staff, patient/resident and/or building occupant safety. A Code White will be activated following attempts to de-escalate threatening behaviour perceived by staff or immediately when staff safety is compromised.

The main objectives of initiating a Code White are:
i. **To preserve the safety of staff, clients and other building occupants.**
ii. **To provide a standard response for staff to follow to obtain assistance in managing episodes involving violent person**
iii. **To communicate an episode of violence to other staff members working in the building.**
iv. **To assist persons displaying violence to regain control over their behaviour.**

A "C O D E W H I T E" CALL BECOMES A "911" CALL OR AN EMERGENCY CALL TO POLICE WHEN:
i. There is a real or perceived threat that lives are in danger
ii. The initial staff or the Incident Commander determines the situation is beyond their abilities
iii. An "edged" weapon or firearm is involved
iv. The aggressive behaviour occurs outside the limits of pursuit established by the organization (e.g., off the hospital grounds)
v. The aggressor is not a client and threatens staff and client safety and other means of intervention are not available

If a coordinated emergency response by several agencies is required, please consult the Town of Espanola Emergency Response Plan.

If a code white situation involves a weapon, refer to Code Silver. If a hostage is involved, refer to Code Purple.

PROCEDURE:

1. INITIATING THE CALL:
• Any staff member can initiate a "Code White" call if he/she identifies a situation in which help is needed.
• A call is initiated by:
   • **Call out loudly**
   • **First available person dials 7777 or 911 to call charge nurse, ask to announce code white and area.**

CODE WHITE TEAM MEMBERS RESPOND TO THE LOCATION OF THE INCIDENT.

Dayshift Team-
- Charge Nurse or Delegate from Acute and Charge Nurse or delegate from ED.
- ALL housekeepers

Nightshift Team-
- RN from Acute Care
- 1 housekeeper in ER
- 1 PSW from North Wing
- RPN from South Wing

2. INCIDENT COMMANDER (<u>Charge Nurse and/or person most familiar with aggressor</u>):

• Assesses the situation and removes all by-standers/visitors/other patients from the area.
• Calls for additional resources if required (e.g., Police)
• Acts as the spokesperson and the ONLY PERSON TALKING
• Obtains information about the situation from the staff and what is expected of responders:
- **reason for Code White call**
- **details of current situation**
- **name of acting out client**
- **history of past incidents if appropriate and interventions that have worked in past**
- **any pertinent medical information**
- **mental status**
- **intervention needed (e.g., medication, removal to seclusion, etc)**
- **location of client**
- **additional information that may be pertinent (could include pertinent medical/nursing orders, committal status)**

• Develops intervention plan to ensure enough resources are available to safely carry out plan
• Informs and directs other staff on the plan of action, including approach to be used, type of intervention and how each member will exit from room
• Ensures safety of staff by having all staff remove items such as watches, glasses if not safety glasses, pens, ties, pagers, scissors, stethoscopes or name tags, etc.
• Ensures personal protection equipment (PPE) such as gloves are available for use
• Assigns staff to specific tasks/positions
• Communicates with acting out individual
• Ensures defusing/debriefing takes place as soon as possible following the incident and that staff know about and are able to access all available support if necessary (including CISM)
• If an injury occurs to a staff member ensures proper first aid provided
• Ensures appropriate documentation is completed

3. STAFF MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES:

• If a "Code White" call has been initiated in your area, take the following steps:
- **Ensure personal safety by removing all personal items which could cause injury (e.g., pens, stethoscopes, name badges, watches, eye glasses, etc)**
- **If possible remove all individuals (clients, visitors, etc) in immediate danger to a safe area**
- **Reduce stimulation in the area by turning off radios, TVs, other noise producing equipment**
- **Reduce activity**
- **Speak calmly and in a quiet manner**
- **Remove any loose equipment that could be used as a weapon or cause injury**
- **Provide details of the incident to the Incident Commander including:**
  - o **Brief history of the incident (including name of client, have client chart**
  - o **available, if possible)**
  - o **What action has been taken**
  - o **What action is required by the Incident Commander**

4. NURSING STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES: In addition to "Staff Responsibilities":
• Ensure a physician is contacted to obtain orders for:
- **Medication (oral and intramuscular)**
- **Restraints if necessary**
- **Seclusion if necessary**
• Prepare and give medication
• Attend to remaining clients in area

5. If police have been contacted, staff should step back from the situation upon police arrival and allow for police to completely take over.

Recovery Plan
- Debrief for staff, residents, patients, volunteers, students using EAP, Social work department or delegate
- Create an action plan to resume operations, evaluate current process, and identify process improvement opportunities.

Reporting the incident:
According to the Fixing Long-Term Care Homes Act 2021 and O. Regulation 246/22, the following critical incidents must be reported to the MOHLTC (Director) immediately, and in as much detail as possible, followed by a written report:
- An emergency, including fire, unplanned evacuation, or intake of evacuees

Related Policies:

Ontario Hospital Association. (2008). Emergency Management Toolkit. [Emergency Management Toolkit.pdf (oha.com)](Emergency Management Toolkit.pdf)

ERHHC. (2019). Reporting of Critical Incidents and Disclosure of Adverse Events.

Ministry of Long-Term Care. (2021). Fixing Long Term Care Homes Act 2021. Ontario.ca/laws/statute/21f39

ERHHC. (2022) Code Silver- Safety from Threat

ERHHC. (2022) Code Purple- Hostage Taking