

True North Imaging

Professional Conduct Policy and Procedures

The Management of True North Imaging (TNI) is committed to providing patients and visitors with a safe and professional environment from which high quality diagnostic examinations and services are delivered. Patients and visitors have the right to be treated with dignity and respect and be kept safe from all unnecessary risk of harm, pain or distress by all members of the TNI team. Employees are required to immediately report to Management any signs of mistreatment, abuse (physical, sexual or mental) by any TNI employee towards a patient or visitor. Any staff member who is being investigated will be removed from unsupervised, direct patient contact and/or may be suspended without pay pending completion of an investigation. Mistreatment or abuse (physical, sexual or mental) toward a patient or visitor may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

It is the policy of TNI that a zero tolerance attitude be followed concerning mistreatment and abuse (sexual, mental or physical) of patients or visitors.

Zero Tolerance: means that no act of mistreatment or abuse is ever acceptable, nor will it be tolerated by TNI.

- Mistreatment and abuse is not acceptable due to the physical and mental harm it causes
- Mistreatment and abuse is not acceptable as it destroys the patient-healthcare provider trust.
- Mistreatment and abuse is not acceptable as it is an abuse of ones position in a healthcare setting.
- Mistreatment and abuse is not acceptable as it destroys the public trust and tarnishes TNI's ability to provide services.

Patient & Visitor Rights:

Patients and visitors have the right:

- To be free from risk of harm;
- To be free from actual harm; and
- To be treated with dignity and respect.

Screening Process for New Employees

TNI will perform a CPIC Criminal Record Check on all new employees and contractors using the following process:

- Candidates, prior to their first day of employment, will complete a "Service Order Consent Form" and provide two pieces of identification.
- The consent form and photocopies of the ID will be sent to "Hire Performance" for the purposes of performing a criminal record check.
- All offers of employment will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of a criminal record check.

Performing Medical Procedures

Technologists, Radiologists and physicians must have patient care as their main concern. In relationships with patients and visitors, clear and professional boundaries must be maintained. All patients and visitors must be treated with dignity and respect.

Technologists, Radiologists and physicians must have the knowledge, skill and judgement to avoid placing patients at unnecessary risk of harm, pain or distress. They must be able to provide appropriate responses to patient inquiries about procedures and related issues, and accept the patient's autonomy and the right of the patient or the patient's substitute decision maker to consent to or refuse service.

Technologists, Radiologists and Physicians must:

- Provide clear and understandable information to the patient or patient's substitute decision maker prior to, during and following the diagnostic procedure/exam
- Give the patient or substitute decision maker an opportunity to ask questions
- Provide answers to questions as appropriate and within ones scope of responsibility
- Refer questions that are outside ones scope of responsibility to an appropriate health professional for answers
- Carry out diagnostic or therapeutic procedures/exams only with the consent (informed or implied) of the patient or substitute decision maker
- Treat the patient with dignity and respect and in accordance with the Code of Ethics of the their professional association/college
- Make modifications to procedures based on the patient's physical, medical and/or emotional status and needs
- Instruct the patient to remove only the clothing and items that will interfere with the diagnostic or therapeutic procedures being performed
- Provide the patient with a gown or sheet to cover areas where clothing was removed
- Explain to the patient when or where they may be touched and why
- Touch the patient in only those areas needed to facilitate carrying out the procedure/exam
- MRTs (medical radiation technologists) must comply with the Regulated Health Professionals Act pertaining to the prevention of sexual abuse and the College of Radiation Technologist's of Ontario sexual abuse prevention program.

Always:

- Act in the best interest of the patient at all times without discrimination against culture, religion, race, disability or sexual preference;
- Inform the patient what you will be doing prior to doing it and obtain the patient's consent verbally or otherwise.
- Never exploit the healthcare provider/patient relationship for any purpose;
- Listen carefully to the patient and provide support whenever you can;
- Document the particulars of any situation where it may be perceived or considered that you have not met the policy of zero-tolerance; and
- Immediately inform your supervisor, manager and/or employer of any incident that could be interpreted as abuse (sexual, mental or physical) or mistreatment.

Gowning Procedures:

Examinations/procedures must be conducted in a way that protects a patient's dignity and right to privacy.

Prior to the examination/procedure staff must;

- Read the request for consultation/requisition and determine if any clothing or jewelry needs to be removed
- Assess the patient's condition and determine whether he/she can accomplish this task without assistance

Where a patient is required to remove any or all of their clothing, a technologist or staff member must:

- Confirm with the patient the exam/procedure being performed and specifically the body part being examined
- Explain to the patient what clothing needs to be removed and why
- Provide the patient with a gown and instructions on how to wear the gown. When necessary, provide the patient with an additional gown to ensure a patient is completely covered
- Patients must be provided with a private place to undress
- If the patient is elderly or incapacitated in anyway, ask the patient if he/she requires help dressing or undressing. If the patient needs assistance, allow them to choose their preferred method of assistance
- If a staff member is required to assist a patient dressing or undressing, touch the patient only where it is necessary to remove clothing. Keep the patient covered as much as possible during the process to maintain the patient's dignity and right to privacy.
- Young children should be undressed by a parent or guardian whenever possible
- Care should be taken before, during and after the examination/procedure to ensure the patient is properly covered
- When deemed necessary, a witness/chaperone may be required or requested by either the staff member or patient

Reporting & Investigation Procedure:

The Management of TNI supports a zero tolerance policy. All complaints will be immediately investigated upon notification. Staff members who are being investigated will be removed from unsupervised, direct patient and visitor contact until the completion of an investigation. In some cases, a staff member may be suspended without pay pending the completion of an investigation. In all cases, it will be the Management's priority to ensure the safety of all patients and visitors.

Complaints may be received either by letter, e-mail, telephone or in person. Complaints may be received by the patients, family member, visitor, staff member or public.

Procedure for Handling a Complaint:

- All patient or visitor complaints relating to mistreatment or abuse **MUST** be immediately forwarded to the Regional Supervisor and Management for investigation.
- The staff member who is first to receive a complaint must:

- Listen without interruption
- Show empathy, concern and a willingness to help – Ask: How can I help?
- Capture essential information (location, day, time, details of event, etc.)
- Ensure all contact information is obtained for person making complaint.
- Inform the person that their complaint will be investigated and that they will be contacted by Management within 24 hours.
- The Regional Supervisor and Management will conduct the investigation by;
 - Informing the involved staff member of the complaint made
 - Make arrangements to remove that staff member from unsupervised direct patient contact
 - Contact the complainant and inform them of the investigation process. Obtain any further information from the complainant about the incident(s)
 - Direct the staff member, who is the subject of the complaint, to document, in writing, their recollection of the alleged incident(s)
 - The Regional Supervisor and Management may obtain information relating to the complaint from a variety of sources including; existing policy and procedures, speaking with the parties identified, reviewing current processes, review of the patient's health record, etc.
 - Management will analyze the data or findings of an investigation and determine an action plan to improve the process/system. Action plans may include: providing education to staff, change to policy, ensuring compliance with policy, contacting the relevant College or association, disciplinary action for involved staff member(s), etc.
 - All results will be documented in writing and shared with the complainant and involved staff member. Investigation results will be placed in the employees human resource file.