I. **PURPOSE**

To support the mission of the hospital by providing high quality patient care in a manner that supports the education and research programs of the UCI School of Medicine and to support the mission of the hospital as a non-profit university medical center in a professional and ethical manner.

II. **BACKGROUND**

A. UC Irvine Medical Center, the Chancellor (the Governing Body), Medical/House staff and employees are to conduct patient care and all business operations in an ethical manner consistent with the mission, values, vision and strategic initiatives and policies referred to in the follow sections.

B. UC Irvine Medical Center's code of ethical business and professional behavior protects the integrity of the clinical decision making process, regardless of how the medical center compensates or shares financial risk with its leaders, managers, clinical staff and licensed independent practitioners. Ethical practices include, but are not limited to patient rights, admission, transfer and discharge policies, billing practices and business and marketing practices.

C. Selected professional groups have adopted the ethical principles set forth by their professional associations; (e.g., Medical Staff: California Medical Association, American Medical Association, Social Services, National Association of Social Workers).

III. **GUIDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

A. **Organizational Performance Improvement Plan**

This plan includes the documents concerning quality of care which provide direction for the organization: mission, vision, values, strategic initiatives and goals for improvement based on identified patient/customer needs. A performance improvement environment is supported by UC Irvine Medical Center leadership which encourages collaboration across all departments to promote interaction and follow-through in a professional and ethical manner in order to achieve patient/customer satisfaction.

B. **Patient Rights Policies**

1. These policies include but are not limited to the following hospital policies:
• Patients Rights and Responsibilities
• Informed Consent
• Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR) Policy
• Life-Sustaining Treatment
• Determination of Death Guidelines
• Advance Directives
• Confidentiality of Medical Information
• Conservatorship/Guardianship: Referral for non-Lanterman-Pehis, Short Act Patients
• Patient Concern/Grievance Procedure
• Restraint and Seclusion
• Decedent Affairs
• Care of the Dying Patient
• Age Appropriate Care
• Hearing Impaired Communications
• Medical Interpreters
• Organ/Tissue Donation Policy
• Patient Diversity
• Plan for Provision of Patient Care

2. Patient Rights Policies are Implemented Through:
   • Staff education in orientation
   • Formal and informal educational offerings
   • Provision of pamphlets in common areas
   • Staff and community education about advance directives
   • Institutional Review Board
   • Consultation with Medical Ethics Committee, Risk Manager, Social Services, Pastoral care and other ancillary personnel
   • Patient care conferences

3. Other general organizational policies are developed using the guidelines established in this policy and implemented through staff education in orientation, formal and informal educational settings.

C. Admissions, Transfer and Discharge Practices

1. Admissions, transfers and discharges are conducted in an ethical manner and are based on appropriate medical necessity and not payor source, race, age, religion, creed, color, national origin, ancestry marital status or sexual preference and in accordance with applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations.

2. Relevant policies include, but are not limited to:
   • Admissions, Discharge and Transfers

IV. PROTECTION OF HUMAN RESEARCH SUBJECTS

   Investigators and research staff members of UC Irvine, the School of Medicine and Medical Center collectively share the responsibility for the ethical conduct of human
subject research. This collaboration must exist in a culture of trust, complete openness and honesty that upholds the highest ethical principles in the conduct of research. In order to elicit federal and public trust and support the pursuit of greater knowledge in an environment that protects the research participant, the University seeks to uphold high ethical standards and maintain integrity in science through:

1. The review and approval, or registration, of all human subject research, including off-site research and research at UCI-affiliated institutions, by the UCI Institutional Review Board (IRB), prior to initiation of the protocol.

2. Approved research protocol processes adhere to regulations and policies delineated by Federal law, State statute, Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, University of California Office of the President, UC Irvine Office of Research Administration, School of Medicine and Medical Center guidelines regarding the health, welfare, safety, rights and privileges of human subjects;

3. Implementation of a joint School of Medicine and Medical Center research oversight program with ongoing review activities that assures the:

   a. Protection of human rights and welfare is maintained through investigator adherence to procedures described in a scientifically sound protocol design, an executed award with the University, and a properly executed subject informed consent for research is obtained and documented prior to any research intervention;

   b. Quality and integrity of data obtained from the interventions defined in the protocol are maintained through elimination of financial or other personal considerations that may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, an investigator's professional judgment in conducting or reporting research.

B. Protections for human research are described in the following documents which include, but are not limited to:

   1. UC Policy on the Protection of Human Subjects in Research
   2. UC Policy on Integrity in Research
   3. UCI Federal-wide Assurance
   4. UCI Campus Policy 485: Protection of Human Research Subjects
   5. UCI Sponsored Projects Administration Policy on Protection of Research Subjects
   6. UCI School of Medicine Research Manual
   7. UCIMC Policy & Procedure: Informed Consent, Research Protocols & Human Subject

   Additional policies are at: http://www.ucop.edu/research/policies.html

V. BILLING PRACTICES

A. General credit and collections procedures are handled in compliance with the U.S. Fair Debt Practices Act.

B. General billing complaints are addressed within 3 working days of receipt by the Patient Financial Services Department. Billing complaints related to patient care
issues are referred to the supervisor of the identified unit for investigation and resolution.

C. Relevant policies include, but are not limited to:
   - Patient Rights and Responsibilities
   - General Billing, Pre-list
   - Collection Services, Payment Agreements
   - Collection Services, CHIP/Charity Care
   - Medicare, Medicare Deductible Process

VI. MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICES (CORPORATE COMMUNICATION)

A. Marketing practices are conducted with truth, fairness (with responsibility to patients, the community and the public at large). Marketing materials reflect only current services available, the level of licensure at time of publication and accreditation, and comply with applicable laws and regulations of truth in advertising and non-discrimination.

B. Marketing materials are extensively reviewed for accuracy by appropriate departmental and executive management prior to publication.


D. Marketing & Public Relations follow the Materials Management policy regarding Ethical Conduct for Vendors and Employees, as stated in University of California Business and Finance Bulletin #43.

VII. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST IN CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIPS

A. Personnel authorized to enter into contracts or approve other contractual or hospital relationships agree to disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest and/or refrain from voting on approval.

B. In order to avoid unfair favoritism, hospital employees and departments abide by the Fair Political Practices Commissions (Form 700 - Statement of Economic Interest) guidelines regarding gifts and gratitudes from hospital vendors or potential vendors. Vendors and employees are informed of this policy.

C. Contracts entered into by UCI with third parties will be approved or rejected in accordance with UC Business and Finance Bulletin #43 so as to be based upon best bid or proposal reviews and potential for conflict of interest.

D. The Purchasing Department does not contract for services with employees or their family members due to the risk of conflict of interest.

E. Contracts with other providers of services define the conditions of participation binding on each of the participants.
F. Policies related to conflicts of interest are further guided by University of California Business and Finance Bulletin #43 and the University of California Conflict of Interest Code.

VIII. MANAGED CARE

A. Utilization management services for patients shall be conducted in accordance with all applicable local, State and Federal laws, whereby services shall be provided without regard to race, age, gender, religion, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status or sexual preference of the patient. Services shall be rendered in the same manner, in accordance with the same standards and within the same time availability as offered to all other patients consistent with existing medical/ethical/legal requirements for providing care and continuity of care to any patient.

IX. REFERENCES

A. University of California Business and Finance Bulletin #43.
C. California Hospital Association Consent Manual, 2003

AUTHOR: Ethics Committee

APPROVALS:

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Policy Review Committee April 07, 2003
Performance Improvement Committee April 09, 2003
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Governing Body April 28, 2003