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SECTION: HOSPITAL SERVICES**AREA: HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION****SUBJECT: MEDIA RELATIONS**

POLICY

It is the policy of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) that the UAMS Office of Communications and Marketing oversees all publicity and advertising and all communications with the press for the clinical areas of UAMS as well as all other areas of the UAMS campus. All requests from the press for publicity or interviews should be directed to and approved by the Office of Communications and Marketing.

PROCEDURE

1. Any members of the media, including, but not limited to, newspaper and television reporters or photographers, or other members of the working press ("Media"), who are on campus in their capacity as a member of the Media, are not permitted in the Emergency Room, on patient floors in the hospital, in outpatient areas or in any clinical areas on the UAMS campus without prior approval from the Office of Communications and Marketing. This applies to all clinical areas including, but not limited to, the Hospital, the Arkansas Cancer Research Center, the Outpatient Center, the Community Women's Center, the Harvey and Bernice Jones Eye Institute, the Institute on Aging, the Stephens Spine and Neurosciences Institute, the Myeloma Institute, and Biomedical I and Biomedical II for research. All members of the Media must be accompanied by a representative of the Office of Communications and Marketing while on UAMS property. This procedure assists in the protection of patient privacy and safety.
2. Because many members of the UAMS medical and professional staffs have well-established reputations for expertise in their respective medical and/or research fields, the press contacts them to obtain information for publication. Such requests should be referred to and coordinated by the Office of Communications and Marketing. A representative of the Office of Communications and Marketing should be present during any interviews which take place. If there are any questions or concerns regarding UAMS policies or procedures in providing information, these questions should be referred to the Office of Communications and Marketing. All employees should refrain from acting in the capacity of an official spokesperson for UAMS unless requested to do so.
3. Any non-routine request for information from the Media concerning the Hospital, clinical or research programs received by either Hospital Administration, Nursing Administration or Research Administration must be shared immediately with the Office of Communications and Marketing.
4. To protect a patient's privacy rights, and to ensure the accuracy of any information provided to the Media, only designated individuals in the Office of Communications and Marketing, Hospital Administration and Nursing Administration are authorized to release to the Media any information concerning patients and their conditions. In accordance with the HIPAA Regulations, patient information, including acknowledgment of a patient's presence at UAMS,

will not be provided to the Media if the patient has elected to opt out of any part of the patient directory. If the patient has *not* opted out of any part of the patient directory, and the Media ask for the patient by name, only a one-word description of the patient's condition may be released, unless the patient has otherwise asked UAMS to withhold all such information from the Media. In accordance with HIPAA, UAMS may elect not to release any patient directory information or other patient information to the Media if it determines it is in the best interest of the patient. In the event of a patient's death, no information regarding the death of a patient will be released to the Media prior to the notification of next-of-kin or other legal representative.

5. Any additional release of information to the Media regarding the patient, beyond the one-word statement of condition, requires written authorization from the patient or the patient's legal representative. If such authorization is obtained, a designated UAMS representative may release only the information authorized by the patient in the signed authorization; however, unless the patient specifies otherwise in the authorization, the information released shall be confined to that of a general nature. A copy of the patient's signed authorization must be kept on file with Communications and Marketing, and a signed copy must be scanned into the patient's record. The signed authorization must meet the requirements for a valid authorization as set forth in the HIPAA regulations. The UAMS Authorization for Release of Information to the Media form should be used since it contains all of the elements required by HIPAA and has been approved by the UAMS HIPAA Office.
6. To ensure compliance with confidentiality laws and the accuracy of any information provided to the Media, only individuals designated by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research Administration are authorized to release information to the Media concerning ongoing research programs.
7. Wallet-sized cards detailing simple guidelines on media relations are available by contacting the Office of Communications and Marketing. It is also recommended that each physician and department head undergo a short training course for media relations, and this course can be scheduled through the Office of Communications and Marketing at 686-8990.
8. Refer all requests from the Media to the Offices listed below depending on when the request is received:
 - a. Weekdays - Requests received on a weekday (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) should be referred to the Office of Communications and Marketing, 686-8998 or pager 395-5989.
 - b. Evenings, Nights and Weekends - Requests received during evenings, nights and weekends should be referred to the Assistant Director of Nursing on duty, at (501) 686-7000 or to the Office of Communications and Marketing at pager 395-5989. Whichever one receives the notification should inform the other of the media request.
9. If a request for information cannot be referred to either the Office of Communications and Marketing or the Assistant Nursing Director on duty, the Administrator on call should be contacted.
10. Any non-routine request for information received by Communications & Marketing, Hospital Administration, Nursing Administration or VCAA/RA should be shared immediately with the other three offices.

Signature: Daniel W. Rah

Date: November 4, 2010