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Manager Surgical  
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Policy Area **Surgical Services**  
Applicability **WA - Providence  
St. Mary MC**

## Observers in the Operating Room, 7020.5018

### POLICY

Due to the risk factors present in the Operating Room environment, observation is discouraged. However, when an observer is present, a policy will establish parameters to be followed by the observer to protect a patient's right to privacy, confidentiality, and not compromise the safety of the environment.

Observers in the OR shall be limited to those individuals with the following objectives:

- attend a C-section when the patient is awake to lend support and be present at the birth of the child.
- a parent may accompany a child to the OR with a 1:1 chaperone only after consultation by surgeon/ anesthesiologist to be present/supportive during induction only.
- provide emotional support or interpretive assistance for the patient who does not speak English, as deemed necessary by the anesthesiologist.
- students currently enrolled in health care curriculums who's objective is to further their education or students applying for health care curricula which require shadowing/observation for application.
- Health Care Industry Representatives to provide assistance in proper use of equipment or supplies.
- Health Care Providers from outside PSMMC who have been approved by the PSMMC medical staff office.
- PSMMC providers are **prohibited** from entering the operating room of a first degree family member or spouse except if that person is a child, mentally debilitated, or delivering a baby (with consent of the mother).

# PROCEDURE

1. All observers that come to the Operating Room will be dressed according to hospital policy.
2. All observers should have sterile fields and technique briefly explained. The circulating RN, Obstetric RNs, and tech are responsible for monitoring and protecting the integrity of the sterile fields.
3. The surgeon, anesthesiologist, circulating RN, and patient must consent to observer being present.
4. Observers will be asked to leave should they be impeding adequate function in the Operating Room. This may be requested by any member of the surgical team.
5. Observers shall be excluded at the time of all emergency surgery.
6. Observers shall be excluded between the hours of 1600 – 0700 due to limited OR personnel in the department. Exceptions may be on a case-by-case basis.
7. All observers shall be reminded to keep talking/moving about in OR to a minimum to reduce airborne contamination.
8. All observers present shall be documented on the perioperative record.
9. Health Care Industry Representatives will follow specific guidelines described in the Providence Health & Services policy PROV-SCM-1004.
10. Specific guidelines for students:
  - a. Name tags will be worn to identify students.
  - b. The student will read and sign the SMMC confidentiality agreement and be given safety awareness information. These records will be maintained at the main OR desk and renewed annually.
  - c. The student shall not scrub in, provide hands on care, or assist in operating equipment.  
\*Exception – If the student is enrolled in a nursing program and is in the department as part of his/her practical clinical experience, they may participate in limited patient care as outlined by instructor and course objectives under the supervision of the registered nurse. If the student is a medical student they must first be cleared by the medical staff office.
- 11.

# REFERENCES

Providence Health & Services. (2014, April 21). Providence. Retrieved from Documentscentral: <http://in.providence.org/sss/resources/documentscentral/policies/Documents/Providence-wide%20Policies/1000%20-%20Supply%20Chain%20Management/PROV-SCM-1004%20-%20HCIR%20in%20Patient%20Care%20Areas.pdf>

## Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
	Louise Dyjur: Chief Nursing Officer	04/2023
	David Stites: Director Surgical Services RN	04/2023
	Vanissa Bender: Manager Surgical Services RN	04/2023
	Bruce Dumser: Physician	10/2022

## Standards

No standards are associated with this document

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