

## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR**

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### **Objective**

The UAB Health System Medical and Dental Staff (“Medical Staff”) is strongly committed to providing high quality patient care in a work environment that fosters teamwork and respect for the dignity of each patient, visitor, employee, volunteer, resident, student, referring physician and member of the Medical Staff. The goal of the Code of Conduct for Professional Behavior (“Code”) is to define expectations for Practitioner’s behavior that promotes a safe and professional health care environment.

### **Definition of Practitioner**

For the purposes of the Code, “Practitioner” includes any member of the Medical or Dental Staff as defined in the UAB Health System Medical and Dental Staff Bylaws. Practitioner also includes any intern, resident or fellow.

### **Appropriate Conduct for Practitioner**

Practitioners are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Appropriate professional behavior is outlined below:

1. Practitioners will treat patients, staff, and colleagues with dignity and empathy.
2. Practitioners will be honest—honorable in all encounters, principles, intentions, and actions – with all colleagues and others they encounter.
3. Practitioner will uphold and comply with all ethical and legal standards that apply to the UAB Health System.
4. Practitioners will respect the privacy and confidentiality of patients and their protected health information such as is contained in the patient’s medical record while in clinical and public areas.
5. All verbal, nonverbal and written communication will be conducted in a mutually respectful manner.
6. Practitioners or their designee will make every reasonable effort to communicate with referring or other treating Practitioners promptly, answer all patient telephone calls the day they are received, and ensure that patient messages are received promptly on an ongoing basis.
7. A Practitioner who is covering for a service or is “on call” will be available to his/her patients and other Practitioners at all times. Practitioners or their designee must answer pages promptly (at no time should this exceed 60 minutes for routine calls and 30 minutes for emergent calls). Practitioner or his designee must round on all patients under his/her care every day. Practitioner must respond to consult requests promptly. A covering or “on-call” Practitioner or their designee will be available to address problems at all times.
8. Practitioner’s who are not covering or “on call,” must arrange appropriate coverage. Such coverage must be communicated to the paging operators and the appropriate clinical offices.
9. Practitioner or designee will attend all their scheduled clinics and are expected to provide reasonable notice when clinic schedules are changed or cancelled.

### **Unacceptable Conduct for Practitioners**

Practitioners are expected to behave in a professional manner, showing respect to other patients, visitors, employees, volunteers, residents, students, referring physicians and other members of the medical and dental staff. Conduct that is disruptive or harassing is unacceptable and is outlined below.

1. Disruptive behavior is an act, or pattern of actions by a Practitioner which adversely affects the medical center’s health care team to the degree it may impede the team’s ability to deliver

quality patient care. Unacceptable disruptive conduct includes, but is not limited to, behavior such as:

- a. conduct that interferes with the provision of quality patient care.
  - b. attacks (verbal, written or physical) directed at others which are personal or go beyond the bounds of fair professional conduct.
  - c. shouting or using vulgar or profane or abusive language.
  - d. writing of malicious, or inappropriate comments (or illustrations) made in the patient medical record or other written documents.
  - e. making public derogatory comments about the quality of care being provided by other Practitioners or nursing personnel, rather than working through peer review/quality review processes or other avenues to address the issues.
  - f. inappropriate expressions of anger such as destruction of property or throwing objects.
  - g. physical assault; and
  - h. conduct that demeans the dignity of any person(s) or disrupts the orderly operation of the facilities of UAB Health System, including but not limited to University Hospital, The Kirklin Clinic, The Kirklin Clinic @ Acton Road, and UAB Health Centers.
2. UAB Health System prohibits all forms of unlawful and unacceptable harassment, including harassment due to race, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation and disability. Sexual harassment in the form of discrimination is expressly prohibited pursuant to UAB, UAHSF, and UAB Health System corporate policy. Conduct, which may constitute sexual harassment, includes repeated, unsolicited verbal comments, gestures, drawings or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which is unwelcome and damaging to the integrity of the employment relationship. Examples of such conduct include:
- a. unwelcome or unwanted physical advances of a sexual nature.
  - b. requests or demands for sexual favors. This includes subtle or blatant expectations, pressures, or requests for any type of sexual favor accompanied by an implied or stated promise for preferential treatment or the risk of negative consequences concerning one's employment status.
  - c. verbal abuse or joking that is sexually oriented and unacceptable to another individual.
  - d. any type of sexually oriented conduct that unreasonably interferes with another's work performance.

### **UAB Health System, University Hospital, and The Kirklin Clinic Policies and Standards**

Nothing in the Code is intended to replace, supersede or conflict with other policies and standards of UAB Health System, University Hospital or The Kirklin Clinic.

### **Professional Peer Review**

It is intended that the reviews, processes and actions taken in conjunction with the Code are taken in the course of professional peer review and constitute professional peer review action. It is also intended that the professional review bodies, reviewers, participants and witnesses in the professional peer review processes outlined in the Code and all professional review records and forms created, generated or reviewed pursuant to the Code, be covered by the confidentiality, immunity and other protections available pursuant to state and federal law.

### **Adoption, Amendment or Repeal**

The Code may be adopted, amended or repealed upon approval of the Medical Staff Executive Committee.

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**Acknowledgment Form**

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I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed a copy of the *UAB Health System Medical and Dental Staff Code of Conduct for Professional Behavior* (“Code”) as part of my Initial Appointment and/or Re-appointment. I understand that I may contact the Chief of Staff for University Hospital or the Chief of Staff for The Kirklin Clinic if I have questions about any provision of the Code. I acknowledge and agree to abide by the terms of the Code as a condition of my appointment or re-appointment to the Medical Staff or UAB Health System.

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**PRINT Name**

**Date**

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**Signature**

**Approved and Endorsed by:**  
The Kirklin Clinic Clinical Practice Committee, July 9, 2002  
The UAB Hospital Clinical Council, September 10, 2002  
The Medical Staff Executive Committee, May 16, 2006

Last Revised, January 2003  
Last Amended, January 2006