

# Standards of Behaviour Handbook

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Our Commitment to Service Excellence



St. Joseph's  
Healthcare  Hamilton

[www.stjoes.ca](http://www.stjoes.ca)

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# St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton

## Our Mission

Living the legacy:  
Compassionate Care.  
Faith.  
Discovery.

## Vision

On behalf of those we are privileged to serve, we will deliver an integrated high quality care experience, pursue and share knowledge, and respect our rich diversity, always remaining faithful to our Roman Catholic values and traditions.

## Values

We commit ourselves to demonstrate in all that we undertake, the vision and values that inspired our Founders, the Sisters of St. Joseph. These are:

- Dignity -
- Respect -
- Service -
- Justice -
- Responsibility -
- Enquiry -

St. Joseph's  
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# Message from the President: Melissa Farrell



A cornerstone to St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton's (SJHH) identity has always been living the legacy through compassionate care, faith, and discovery. Since 1890, there has been tremendous growth and change at St. Joe's. One thing that has not changed, however, is the tradition of dedication and service that the founding Sisters brought to our hospital. Undoubtedly, one of the areas that gives us greatest pride is that "living our Mission" has always served as one of our guiding principles. As we move into a rapidly changing and sometimes unpredictable future, we recognize the vital need to continue to use the Sisters' Legacy as a guide for our future growth and development. With that in mind, we have committed to following the principles of the C•A•R•E acronym: Compassion, Attitude, Responsiveness and Excellence.

These C•A•R•E principles are the framework to our Standards of Behaviour outlined in this booklet. These standards are meant to serve as a guide to our interactions at SJHH. We are all responsible for holding ourselves and one another accountable to achieving these Standards on a daily basis.

By joining together in honouring the Legacy of the Sisters, and building on the tremendous skill and dedication of our staff and physicians, we can continue to reach our vision of making a positive difference to each other, to the quality of care to our patients, and to the wellbeing of our community, today and into the future. We are committed to excellence, and dedicated to discovery. We will continue to lead, learn, build, and care in order to strategically move with the future of health care.

Sincerely,

**Melissa Farrell**

St. Joseph's  
Healthcare  Hamilton

# Service Excellence Vision

Rooted in the Mission of St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, our service delivery promise is to be an international leader in C•A•R•E to our patients, families and staff.

## Our Commitment

In 1890, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Hamilton established St. Joseph's Hospital to respond to the needs of immigrants, orphans, the poor and the dispossessed. In this same spirit of compassion, innovation and commitment to the needy, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton will continue to strive for excellence in the care of the people of the Hamilton-Wentworth Region and the surrounding areas. Together, we are dedicated to these values and will commit our skills and resources to fulfill this mission.

# C.A.R.E

## Our Commitment to Patients/Clients

### Compassion

We will treat you as a valued human being with individual spiritual, physical and emotional needs. We will engage in open, honest and constructive communication by giving you our full attention and by listening carefully.

### Attitude

We will be friendly, courteous and empathetic in all of our interactions with you. We will work with you as a full partner in decisions that affect you in a sensitive and ethical manner. We will always treat you with Dignity and Respect.

### Responsiveness

We will respond to your needs in a timely and positive fashion following up with you to confirm your satisfaction. We value the efforts of our teams and will always collaborate to ensure that we respond appropriately.

### Excellence

We will adhere to the highest standards of professional practice and behaviour in all that we do. We value accountability both as individuals as well as teams. We will use best practice and international standards to serve you better.

# Standards of Behaviour

Based on our commitment to C•A•R•E,  
our behaviour at SJHH is guided by the following standards.

## Dignity

- Respect everyone's need for privacy.
- Knock or indicate your presence before entering a patient's room or examining area.
- Make sure the patient is appropriately covered. Close curtains or doors during procedures and examinations.
- Communicate with patients and family members in a private area.
- Avoid conversing inappropriately within earshot of patients or visitors.

## Communication

- Reduce noise level to promote a peaceful environment.
- Acknowledge patients and visitors. When required, introduce yourself and your function.
- Use "please" and "thank you".
- Address everyone appropriately. Use preferred names and avoid use of endearments.
- Listen with empathy. Provide reassurance and support.
- Explain procedures. Answer questions clearly using appropriate language.
- Ensure understanding by asking questions and actively listening.
- Ensure all patient information is appropriately documented and communicated.
- Keep patients informed and educated about each aspect of their care.
- Respect the individual's time and needs. Respond promptly and do not ignore anyone.
- Show empathy and kindness when interacting with colleagues, patient and visitors.
- Thank others for cooperating or responding.
- Refrain from discussing your personal life with colleagues in front of patients.
- Respond quickly and non-defensively to frustrations or concerns.
- Take concerns seriously, not personally.
- Respect cultural and religious needs. Seek interpreter or spiritual guidance when needed.

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## Telephone Etiquette

- Identify yourself and your department/function (in plain language) when making or answering a call.
- Be friendly and courteous.
- Give your full attention to the caller.
- Know how to transfer a call and put someone on hold. Ask permission before putting someone on hold. Thank the caller for waiting.
- Be willing and able to redirect calls and take messages.
- Assist the caller in whatever way that you can.

## E-mail Etiquette

- Use the phone to discuss complex problems or sensitive information.
- Do not send an e-mail when you are angry or frustrated.
- Keep e-mails short and to the point, whenever possible.
- Use the spell and grammar check function on your computer.
- Use the Subject heading to identify the topic of your e-mail.
- Limit your use of the “cc” function.
- Do not allow the use of your Smart Phone to interfere with your participation in a meeting.
- Respond to your e-mails in a timely way.

## Waiting Time

- When patients arrive for an appointment, provide them with a realistic assessment of how long they might have to wait. If patients are kept waiting, acknowledge the fact that they have had to wait and thank them for their patience.
- When patients arrive for service and you know that their wait time is likely to be lengthy, let them know this in a supportive way.
- Provide periodic updates on their wait time



## Confidentiality and Privacy

- Ensure all patient and personal staff information is kept confidential.
- Ensure all patient information is only communicated within the patient's Circle of Care.
- Avoid discussing patient specific information in public areas.

## Appearance

- Wear your identification badge at all times.
- Take pride in your appearance and the appearance of SJHH.
- Dress professionally and follow the SJHH dress code.
- When sharing a work area, help keep it tidy and clean.
- Do not wear scented products to work.

## Way-finding

- Give directions to anyone who appears lost or asks for assistance.
- If the route is not easy, when possible, take the person to his/her destination.
- Point out signs so the person can find his/her way back.

## Maintaining Standards of Practice/Service

- Ensure that you fully understand your role and its responsibilities.
- Stay current and up-to-date in your area of service.
- Take advantage of educational opportunities.
- Ask for feedback on your performance.
- Take pride in your contribution to serving our community.
- Maintain hospital standards of safety.

# C.A.R.E

## Our Commitment to Co-Workers

“Co-workers” is defined broadly to include Staff, Managers, Volunteers, Physicians, Learners, Contract Workers.

### Commitment to Co-Workers

- Smile and greet your co-workers when you arrive at work.
- Be friendly, courteous and respectful.
- Make full use of the words “please” and “thank you.”
- Regularly express appreciation to the people you work with.
- Arrive at work and return from your breaks on time.
- Take responsibility for your share of the work.
- Be willing to pitch in and provide assistance to co-workers when needed.
- Maintain confidentiality as appropriate.
- Listen respectfully and remain open to new ideas.
- Celebrate accomplishments with your team.
- Be respectful of differences (including cultural) among your co-workers.
- Do not engage in gossip or spread rumors.
- Deal directly and promptly with any problems that arise with your co-workers.
- Be aware of your own behaviour and its impact on your colleagues.
- Learn to manage your stress. Stress is never an excuse for rude or disrespectful behaviour.
- Remember that shared laughter is a great stress reliever.
- Use your energy to suggest solutions rather than complain about things.
- Be welcoming and supportive of new staff.
- Be willing to mentor new staff.

# What is Inappropriate Behaviour?

Inappropriate behaviour is any behaviour that violates or does not meet the Standards defined in this booklet. Anyone who observes inappropriate behaviour is encouraged to communicate his/her concern directly to the person exhibiting it or to seek assistance.

Inappropriate behaviour is also defined in our existing [Prevention of Violence in the Workplace Policy \(100-ADM\)](#). For example:

- Physical violence toward patients/clients, visitors or colleagues
- Verbal abuse, including swearing, insults, condescending remarks, sarcastic language or malicious gossip
- Bullying, including vicious words, belittling, undermining, coercion, and professional humiliation
- Sexual abuse/harassment
- Sexual assault
- Racist comments
- Willful damage to SJHH property, including: banging, kicking or throwing equipment
- Use or sale of illegal drugs on SJHH property
- Sabotage or theft
- Serious violations of clinical practice

If you observe behaviour that violates policy 100-ADM (Prevention of Violence in the Workplace), report your observation right away to your Manager, Head of Service, Chief of Department, Professional Practice Lead, the Department of Human Resources or Medical Affairs Office. You will receive notification that action has been taken to address your concern.

Under this Policy, and in accordance with the Human Rights Code and the Occupational Health and Safety Act, all Managers and Heads of Service are obliged to follow-up and investigate all reports of violence, bullying, threats, abuse or harassment in the workplace.

# Holding Yourself and Others Accountable

In order to maintain an environment of C•A•R•E, a process has been established to hold all members of the SJHH team accountable to these Standards of Behaviour. The purpose of this Accountability Model is to empower anyone who observes inappropriate behaviour to address it in a timely, direct and respectful manner. The method you use to hold others accountable depends on whether you are in a “Management” or an “Employee” role.

## Responsibilities of St. Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton Managers

“Manager” is broadly defined to include Supervisors, Managers, Directors, Members of the Executive Team, Heads of Service, Chiefs of Departments and Chief of Staff.

## Communicate

Speak directly, respectfully and privately to the person, letting him/her know of your concern in a timely way, listening to his/her account of the situation. Reinforce the importance of adhering to the Standards. Strategize with the person on how he/she can be supported to successfully change his/her behaviour or to address more systemic problems that may be contributing to the behaviour. If the person does not report directly to you, report the behaviour to the person's supervisor, who will then have the responsibility for dealing with it. You are expected to initiate this process within three business days of identification of the concern.

## Seek assistance

If direct communication and supportive measures do not resolve the issue, depending on the nature and seriousness of the concern, you are encouraged to seek assistance from your immediate Supervisor, the Department of Human Resources, a Head of Service, Chief of Department or the Medical Affairs Office.

## Proceed with discipline

If there is still no resolution, then you must contact the Department of Human Resources or Medical Affairs Office who will work collaboratively with all parties to address the concern through a process of progressive discipline, as appropriate.

# Responsibilities of St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton Employees

For purposes of these Standards of Behaviour, "employee" includes SJHH Staff, Physicians, Volunteers, Learners, Contract Workers as well as McMaster University or Hamilton Health Sciences employees who are located at SJHH.

## Communicate

You are encouraged to speak directly, respectfully and privately to the person, letting him/her know of your concern in a timely way. If you are not comfortable doing this, seek assistance.

## Seek assistance

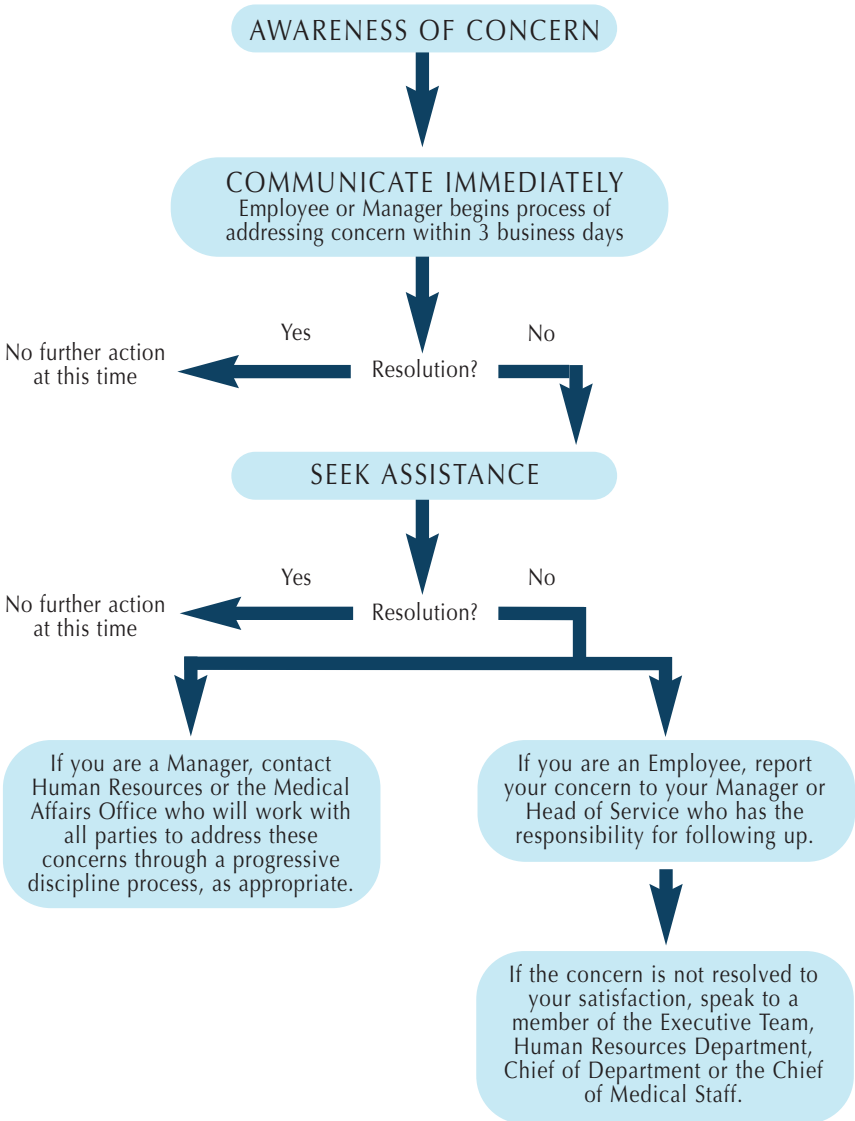
If you are unable to speak to the person directly, or if there is no resolution, you should speak to your Manager. You can also seek assistance from your Professional Practice Lead or your Union Representative.

## Report

If the issue remains unresolved, you should report your concern to your Manager or Head of Service. He/she will then take responsibility for addressing it. You will receive notification that action has been taken to address your concern.

Remember that if you report violence, bullying, harassment or disrespectful behaviour to your Manager or Head of Service, under the Human Rights Code and Occupational Health and Safety Act, he/she is obliged to follow-up and investigate.

# Overview of SJHH Accountability Model



# Dealing with Rude and Disrespectful Behaviour from someone who has more “Authority” than you: A Manager or a Physician

If you are uncomfortable speaking directly to the Manager or the Physician about how his/her behaviour has affected you, or you have done so and have not reached a resolution, then you have the following options:

- Report your concern to your Manager’s or the Physician’s Supervisor within three business days. The Supervisor will then have the responsibility for following up on your concern.
- Contact the Department of Human Resources or Medical Affairs Office who will advise you on the appropriate next steps.

You will receive notification that action has been taken to address your concern.

There will be no reprisal against any individual for making a complaint in good faith. Malicious reporting, however, will not be tolerated.



# Description of Responsibilities of Parties Involved in Resolving Concerns

## Professional Practice Lead

The Professional Practice Lead is available to provide Health Professional Staff, Managers and Physicians with assistance in addressing issues regarding the Standards of Behaviour that are relevant to the Professional Practice Lead's area of practice.

## Union Leadership

Union leadership is available to advocate, advise and support their respective members through all steps of the resolution process.

## Human Resources Department/ Medical Affairs Office

The Department of Human Resources and Medical Affairs Office are available to work collaboratively with all parties to address the concern through a process of progressive discipline, in accordance with hospital and organization policies, collective agreements or Professional staff by-laws.

# Helpful Tools

Creating an environment of dignity and respect starts with each and every one of us. Positive and respectful behaviour is contagious and by maintaining an outlook that is consistent with the values in this booklet, we engage and empower our colleagues to do the same.

## Tips for managing difficult situations:

- Approach the person when you are feeling calm.
- Choose a time when the person can give you his/her full attention.
- Stay focused on the problem behaviour, not the person.
- Be respectful in your approach. Avoid confrontation.
- Use an “I” message. Let the person know how the behaviour has affected you.
- Listen carefully to the person’s response.
- Clarify your understanding of the person’s position.
- If necessary, ask the person to clarify his/her understanding of your position.
- Stay focused on the facts.
- Take responsibility for any contribution you have made to the problem.
- Attempt to reach a shared understanding.
- Develop some options for resolution.
- Manage your own emotional response. Stay calm.
- Ask for a “time-out” if the situation escalates.
- If the person you are talking to asks for a “time out”, respect his/her request.
- If you cannot resolve the problem, seek assistance.

# Helpful Tools

## What to say to address rude or disrespectful behaviour:

- "It sounds like you are having a bad day. Can I help you in any way?"
- "You may not be aware of it, but you sounded a bit abrupt when you spoke to that patient."
- "I am uncomfortable with how you said that to me."
- "I can see that you are upset. Is there is something we can do together to fix it?"
- "I would rather not talk about our co-workers behind their backs. Can we change the subject?"
- "Can we agree to disagree on this?"
- "Can we brainstorm some other options?"
- "When you speak to me in that tone of voice, I feel like you don't respect my opinion."
- "It sounds like you have a serious concern. It might be helpful to speak to your Manager about it."
- "Please stop. I can take criticism, but this kind of talk does not work for me. If you have an issue, let's talk it over in a professional manner."
- "I think we may need to get someone to help us with this issue."

For tips on dealing with aggressive behaviour see our Prevention of Violence in the Workplace Policy (100-ADM).

These Standards of Behaviour have been created based on extensive feedback from St. Joseph's Healthcare staff through Focus Groups, Workshops, the Culture Survey and Leadership Walkabouts.

We are committed to Service Excellence and to following the C•A•R•E principles to continue to honour the Mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Hamilton.

