

Policy Title: Terminating the Physician/Patient Relationship

Policy #:

Approved by:

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Effective date:

Last revision date:

Policy: A physician may choose to terminate a relationship with a patient when it has been compromised due to non-compliance, missed visits, unreasonably demanding, verbal or physical abuse or staff or other issues non-compatible to continued care.

Purpose: To provide appropriate steps to terminate the physician/patient relationship in order to minimize the claim of patient abandonment.

Procedure:

1. The physician shall carefully evaluate the medical status and needs of the patient.
 - Services shall never be withdrawn without physician review and approval.
2. The physician shall determine that appropriate, timely, alternative medical care can be arranged.
3. Third party payor contractual relationships shall be reviewed to ascertain if there are any provisions regarding termination of care.
4. The decision to terminate services shall be discussed directly with the patient by the physician or administrator whenever possible.
 - Patient shall receive an explanation of the need to arrange other care to continue ongoing treatment and or avoid future medical problem.
 - Document discussion in the patient's medical record.
5. Patient will be sent a written notice, by certified mail, clearly stating:
 - The physician is withdrawing services and reason terminating services
 - Effective date, usually thirty (30) days from the date of the letter
 - Statement that physician shall be available for emergency treatment
 - Resources or recommendations how patient can locate a new physician
6. Include with letter, authorization form for release of records and a return self-addressed stamped envelope.
7. A copy of the letter and the return receipt shall be retained in the patient's medical record.