

Practice Guideline

March 22, 2007

All parties in health care settings share in the responsibility to contribute positively to an environment of mutual trust and respect.

Guideline Details

Both Placing and Receiving Agencies should have policies and procedures consistent with the BC Human Rights* Code to address behaviours that are inappropriate, unacceptable, or disrespectful.

If a student feels discriminated* against, harassed* by, or in a conflict* with a Receiving Agency staff or patient, they should:

- Not ignore it or assume it will go away by itself.
- Tell the person that the behaviour is unwelcome and request that the behaviour(s) stop.
- Immediately report the situation to the supervising faculty.
- Keep a record of all relevant facts including the date, time, and location of the incident(s). If possible, obtain the names of any witnesses.
- If a request to stop does not resolve the matter or if the student is not able to address the problem with the individual concerned, the student should bring the complaint to the supervising faculty for intervention.

Faculty should act as a liaison and advocate for the student in a timely manner with the Receiving Agency staff, practice setting manager and practice education contact.

Faculty who feel discriminated against, harassed, or in a conflict should contact the Receiving Agency practice education contact and/or practice setting manager.

If a Receiving Agency staff feel discriminated against, harassed, or in a conflict with a Placing Agency person (student, faculty, etc), they should follow the Receiving Agency policy and resolution process. Involve the Receiving Agency practice education contact as soon as possible.

Students may also be employees of the Receiving Agency.

- If an employee is in the role of 'student' when the situation occurs, follow the process for students in this guideline and not the process for employees.
- If a student is working as an undergraduate employee when the situation occurs, follow the Receiving Agency policy and resolution process for employees.

Roles & Responsibilities

All parties are responsible for acting respectfully and abiding by Receiving Agency Human Rights and Personal Conflict policies.

Students are considered representatives of their profession and, as such, should practice within their professional code of ethics and standards of practice.

* indicates term is defined under 'Definitions' section

Faculty act as an advocate for the student.

Consequences of Non-compliance

The primary intent in acting to resolve concerns and disputes should be to create a positive environment that supports learning and mutual respect however, should remedial measures not be sufficient, the practice education experience may be terminated.

Rationale

Students and faculty have the same right as Receiving Agency staff and the population they serve, to a respectful, equitable and fair work and service environment. As such, students and faculty are expected to follow Receiving Agency standards of conduct. These rights and expectations are rooted in law through the BC Human Rights Code, in professional practice standards, and in Receiving Agency policy.

It is important to apply the right process to the right situation (e.g. the student process for the 'student' even if that student also happens to be an employee of the Receiving Agency). Employees involve human resources, their manager and/or union whereas students involve supervising faculty who work with the site manager.

Definitions

Human Rights: issues of discrimination and harassment on the basis of one or more of the thirteen protected categories as defined by the BC Human Rights Code. These protected categories include: age, colour, ancestry, birthplace, family status, marital status, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion, political belief, physical disability, mental disability, and unrelated criminal conviction.

Discrimination: unfair, differential treatment of an individual or group, whether intended or not, on the basis of one or more of the protected categories.

Harassment: comments or conduct that would constitute discrimination, whether intended or not, which target an individual or group because of their membership in one or more of the protected categories. It is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome and that causes a negative impact on the individual or group.

Personal Conflict: actual or perceived opposition of needs, values and/or interests between individuals that result in unwanted stress or tension and negative feelings between the individuals involved.

References

Learning & Career Development. (February 2006) Student Practice Education Policy and Procedure DRAFT. Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, Vancouver, BC.

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Ibid. (September 2003). Standards of Conduct-Medical Staff. Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, Vancouver, BC. Retrieved on June 9, 2006 from http://www.vch.ca/medlink/pdfs/code_of_conduct_final_10sept03.pdf

Government of BC. (April 2003). Human Rights in BC - Harassment. Ministry of Attorney General. Queen's Printer, Victoria, BC. Retrieved on June 9, 2006 from <http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/programs/hrc/publications/Harassment.pdf>

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