



## CODE WHITE – OUT OF CONTROL SITUATION

<b>Issued by:</b> Support Services	<b>ISSUE DATE:</b> January 28, 2011
<b>MANUAL:</b> Emergency Procedures	<b>SECTION:</b> Codes

### VALUE STATEMENT

In keeping with its value of *Excellence*, the organization is committed to ensuring that procedures are in place in the event of an emergency.

### OBJECTIVE

A ‘Code White’ will be used by any staff member to bring immediate assistance with an “out of control” situation.

### DEFINITIONS

*‘Code White Behaviour’*: Could include any verbal threats (with or without a weapon or other instrument of harm), physical intimidation and/or the application of force (including pinching, punching, slapping, striking out with an object, etc.).

*‘Command Centre’*: The Command Centre’s responsibilities are generally executive in nature and are designed to develop, direct, and maintain a viable organization during the situation. The Centre also functions to keep the organization coordinated with other agencies.

- At SJCCC, the Command Centre is the reception area. In the event this is inaccessible the alternate location is the Hub. Retrieve the Disaster Box from the Therapy Kitchen which is located beside the HUB.
- At SJV, the Command Centre is the reception area. In the event this is inaccessible the alternate location is Lakeview Nursing Station.
- At VSGV, the Command Centre is the reception area. In the event this is inaccessible the alternate location is Whitson Nursing Station.

*‘Emergency Response Boss’*: Is the most senior staff person in the building. They have the authority to activate any Emergency Preparedness plan. The following is the hierarchy as to who is in charge during an emergency for those present on site:

- VP of Clinical Services at SJCCC, or the Site Administrator at SJV, or VSGV,
- DOCs at the Villas/Clinical Managers at CCC,
- ADOC,
- Charge RN, and
- RPN.
- The most senior person in the hierarchy on the premises assumes the role of Emergency Response Boss until another individual further up the hierarchy replaces them. The next highest person on the hierarchy assumes the role of the Scene Captain and reports to the scene of the event.

*'Intervention Leader'*: Is the first person on the scene and will be dealing directly with the person(s) displaying the aggressive behavior throughout the procedure OR until this responsibility is transferred to the Scene Captain.

*'Scene Captain'*: Is the individual who responds to the scene and is responsible for the events at the scene. The Scene Captain will communicate with the Emergency Response Boss and take direction from the Emergency Response Boss.

## **POLICY**

A 'Code White' is indicated in any situation where an individual (patient/resident, staff or visitor) is behaving in a way that creates a potential or actual threat to:

- One's own safety;
- The safety of others; and/or
- Facility property.

### Team Intervention

Team Intervention is:

- More effective than dealing with the situation alone,
- Provides safety for both the patient/resident/individual and staff,
- Decreases the chance of injuries, and
- Provides a number of witnesses attending a violent incident therefore providing protection against false charges or litigation.

### Response Team

At SJCCC, the Response Team will be made up of:

#### Day shift/Afternoon shift:

- 2 RPNs from each floor,
- Available Social Workers and Chaplains,
- Two Allied Health, and
- Maintenance staff.

Night shift: Response team will be all available staff.

At SJV, the Response Team will be made up of:

#### Day shift/Afternoon shift:

- Charge RN,
- RPN from every unit
- One maintenance staff (when on duty),
- Social worker
- One Food Services staff,
- One Life Enrichment staff, and
- One Laundry Staff.

Night shift: Response team will be all available staff.

At VSGV, the Response Team will be made up of:

#### Day shift/Afternoon shift:

- Charge RN,
- RPN from every unit

- One maintenance staff (when on duty),
- Social Worker
- One Food Services staff,
- One Life Enrichment staff, and
- One Laundry Staff.

**Night shift:** Response team will be all available staff.

## **PROCEDURE**

1. In the event of a violent or aggressive situation, staff initially involved should employ methods to diffuse the situation using non-threatening words and actions. If this is inappropriate or non-effective and/or the staff member is feeling threatened or has concerns for the safety of others in the area, the Code White policy will be initiated. The most appropriate person on scene will assume the role of Intervention Leader (refer to Definitions section of this policy).
2. The Intervention Leader or designate will announce the Code White over the P.A. system stating the code and location three consecutive times. For example, “Code White Level One Room 101, Code White Level One Room 101, Code White Level One Room 101”. Paging overhead should be made from a safe location.

***NOTE:*** All Code White situations need to be announced over the PA system in order to alert all staff

3. The Intervention Leader will monitor the situation until the Scene Captain (person responsible for Coordinating the Response Team) arrives, then provide a verbal report of the situation to the scene captain
4. The Scene Captain will retrieve the nearest 2-way radio and proceed to the scene and assist the intervention leader in de-escalating the out of control situation.
5. When the Code White Response Team/brigade responds to the overhead page and is assembled, the Scene Captain will provide direction based on the situation;
  - a. Assigning staff to close the door to each wing.
  - b. Direct staff to remove vulnerable resident.
  - c. Do an environmental scan and direct staff to remove anything in the vicinity that can be used a weapon
  - d. Call the police and ambulance if appropriate
  - e. If the situation is quickly de-escalating, send some staff back to their unit
  - f. Report to the emergency response boss regularly and obtain further direction

**Note:** Staff should ensure their own safety and the safety of others at all times. Ensure to be familiar with additional strategies located at the end of the polices

6. The Emergency Response Boss will proceed to the Command Centre and will monitor the situation with updates and requests from the Scene Captain via 2-way radio.
7. If the situation requires intervention from emergency services rather than clinical based interventions, the Emergency Response Boss or Designate will call 911.

8. The Emergency Response Boss or delegate will direct the emergency services to the scene upon their arrival.
9. When the situation is under control the Scene Captain will give direction to announce “Code White – All Clear” three times and will debrief with the team members.

#### Post Code White Procedural Guidelines

1. The Social Worker, Chaplain, Director of Care or Registered Nurse conducts an Informal Stress Debriefing Session during the shift in which the Code White occurred. Analyze the Code White situation to determine what interventions were effective and how the staff’s response could have been improved. Ensure that the conclusions from the above analysis are integrated into future staff education about Code White and considered in any future policy or procedure development related to the Code White.
2. An operational debriefing may be conducted if required. Minimally, the Code White Checklist at the end of this policy should be completed and submitted to the Site Administrator (for SJCCC this is the VP Clinical Services).
3. When the Code White involves a patient/resident, documentation of the incident must be added to Point Click Care and incident summary is completed and submitted to the Site Administrator (for SJCCC this is the VP Clinical Services). Please refer to the ‘*Critical Incident*’ policy in the Administration Manual within the Safety and Security section for further direction.
4. If the Code White involved a physical injury to an employee, an ‘*Occupational Injury and Illness Report*’ will be completed by the respective Director of Care or supervisor.

#### Things to Remember

1. It is important to remember that the “out of control” person is just that - out of control. Feelings such as confusion, frustration, fear, grief or anger are interfering with the individual’s ability to cope with the current situation. As a result, they are unable to behave in a reasonable and safe manner. As the care provider, you must control your own behavior in order to manage or de-escalate the situation and achieve a safe and appropriate resolution.
2. Focus on the person’s behavior and the events that triggered it. It is not productive to judge or demean the individual.
3. Assume that if the person could control their behavior, they would do so.

#### **REFERENCES**

*Critical Incident*

*How to Respond During an Active Shooter Incident*

*Mock Code White Check List*

*Occupational Injury and Illness Report*

*Procedure for Lockdown for an Active Weapon Incident*

*Strategies for Dealing with a Hostage-Taker*

*Strategies for Dealing with an “Out of Control” Situation*

Gatekeeper: Clinical Services	Last Review Date: April 1, 2022
Next Review Date: April 1, 2023	Last Revision Date: April 1, 2022

## CODE WHITE CHECKLIST

<b>This form is to be completed by the person(s) responsible for conducting and coordinating the mock code white.</b>			
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>		
		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Was the announcement of the code white and location over the PA system completed?			
Did the staff who were initially involved employ methods to diffuse the situation using non-threatening words or actions?			
Did the Scene Captain retrieve the nearest 2-way radio and proceed to the scene?			
Did the Intervention Leader monitor the situation until the Scene Captain arrived?			
Was the Response team at the Scene?			
Was the Intervention Leader at the Scene?			
Was briefing given to the Scene Captain by the Intervention Leader?			
Did the Scene Captain make every effort to negotiate with the person(s) displaying aggressive behavior?			
Was there clear communication between the Scene Captain and the Emergency Response Boss?			
When the situation was under control, did the Scene Captain provide direction to announce "Code White All Clear"?			
Did the Social Worker, Chaplain, DOC and RN conduct an informal stress debriefing session during the shift?			
Comments:			
<b>Print Name:</b>			