



**Policy and Procedure Manual**

<b>Policy #:</b>	3.66.000
<b>Issued:</b>	May 2004
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<b>Section:</b>	3.0 Clinical Care/Patient Rights

**Clinical Observership**

**Purpose:**

To describe Boston Medical Center's (BMC) policy governing observation of patient care in clinical areas.

**Policy Statement:**

BMC respects the rights of its patients to privacy while receiving medical care, but it also realizes its obligation to contribute to education. As part of its educational mission, BMC permits certain individuals who have been appropriately screened to observe patient care in clinical areas.

**Definition:**

**Observer:** Any individual present in a clinical area observing patient care who is ***not***:

1. A member of the BMC workforce
2. A medical student authorized to participate by the Boston University School of Medicine
3. A dental student authorized to participate by the Boston University Goldman School of Dental Medicine
4. A resident or fellow in a BUMC, ACGME, or ADA accredited training program registered through the GME Office
5. A rotator from a non-BUMC, ACGME, or ADA accredited training program (these residents must register as rotators through the GME Office; refer to the Rotator Policy on the GME website)
6. A nursing or clinical (Radiology, Lab, etc.) student in a program with a current affiliation agreement
7. A nursing or clinical student requesting a one-time observation at BMC
8. A high school student (individually or in a group) coming to BMC to observe in clinical areas to explore career opportunities

**Application:**

All observers in clinical areas

**Exceptions:**

Patients  
Visitors  
Manufacturers' representatives

**Procedure:**

**General Requirements:**

1. BMC observerships must not be used as a means to obtain United States-based experience for the purpose of seeking graduate training in the United States.
2. The observer will not receive any academic credit for the experience. The observership does not constitute clinical education or graduate clinical education.
3. Non-Boston University medical or dental students must register as students with the appropriate Registrar's Office.
4. All other observers of patient care in clinical areas must be sponsored by the director of the clinical areas where the observations will occur. The sponsor must comply with the requirements of the procedures relating to observership described below.
5. The observer must be supervised by the sponsor or designee at all times when in the presence of patients. He/she is not allowed unrestricted access to BMC.
6. All observers must wear a visitor's pass when on BMC property.
7. The sponsor must obtain consent from any patient if an observer wishes to be present to observe that patient's care. If the patient declines to allow the observer's presence, the observer must leave the area.
8. Observers are not members of the BMC workforce. However, they are required to comply with all BMC policies and procedures. A violation of any policy or procedure will result in the termination of the observership.
9. Observers are not allowed to have direct contact with patients, their families or friends. "Contact" includes, but is not limited to, taking patient histories, performing physical exams, writing/entering notes or orders in medical records, drawing bloods, taking EKGs, assisting clinicians with procedures, obtaining the results of diagnostic tests, counseling of any description and all other activities that might be considered or related to patient care.

Sponsoring an Observer:

Any director of a clinical area who intends to allow an observer in his/her clinical area to observe patient care must sponsor the observer and, within thirty (30) days before the observership begins, must:

1. Complete the Observer Form requesting identifying information about the observer, including the objective of the period of observation.
2. Have the observer complete and sign a confidentiality agreement (available on the Information Technology Department's website).
3. Obtain documentation showing the observer is up-to-date on immunizations, vaccines, and screenings:
  - a. The observer must have received TB screening within the year prior to the observation period.
  - b. Acceptable written documentation of immunity to measles, mumps, and rubella:
    - a. adequate immunization with live measles, mumps and rubella vaccines
    - b. laboratory evidence of immunity
  - c. Documentation of a dT within the last ten (10) years.
  - d. Documentation of a history of varicella, positive (immune) titer, or two varicella vaccinations
  - e. Documentation of effective Hepatitis B immunization (positive immune response), completed hepatitis immunization series, or a signed declination.
  - f. Receipt of acellular pertussis vaccine is recommended but not required.
  - g. Annual influenza vaccine is highly recommended.
4. If the observation is anticipated to last thirty (30) days or longer, ensure that the observer has a BMC picture identification badge, is BMC HIPAA trained, and is trained in safety and infection control.
5. Make a copy of the observer's government issued picture ID (license or passport) and sign a statement attesting that the sponsor has verified the identity of the observer.
6. Provide verification from the current or most recent employer or school and a letter proposing the individual as an observer.
7. Obtain a signed attestation from the chief of the service stating that s/he is responsible for assuring that the person will act only in the role of an observer.

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Once all paperwork is completed, the sponsor must provide a copy of all documents to the Medical Affairs Office and maintain the original file in his/her office.

**Responsibility:**

Directors of Clinical areas

**Forms:**

Observer Application Form 03.66.00a

Confidentiality Form

**Other Related Policies:**

GME Departmental Policy on Rotators

TB Screening Policy # 07.33.00

**Section # 3.0 Clinical Care/Patient Rights**

**Policy No.:** # 03.66.000

**Title:** Clinical Observership

**Initiated by:** Medical Affairs

**Contributing Departments:**

1. Office of General Counsel
2. Human Resources Department
3. Information Technology
4. Nursing