

Policies and Procedures: **Transition-of-Care Patient Handoff**

REQUIREMENTS

- This policy is in compliance with ACGME requirement as of July 1, 2011 that programs have a Transition-of-Care Patient Handoff process.
- This policy applies to both Anatomic and Clinical Pathology services.
- This policy is to describe the handoff procedures necessary to facilitate both continuity of care and patient safety.

DEFINITION:

Transition-of-care patient handoff includes any situation when a trainee cannot continue to be responsible for the patient test(s) or specimen(s) such that another trainee needs to assume responsibility for a patient test(s) or specimen(s) due to the current care provider completing their shift, going off rotation, switching rotations or after On Call.

PROCESS:

- Transition-of-care patient **handoff can occur** via email, per telephone, face-to-face or via an internal communication system such as our “Department of Pathology Clinical Pathology Call Quality Assurance Documentation”.
- If Email communication is used they must be encrypted to protect Patient Health Information by beginning the subject line with “++”.
- Responsible of the trainee currently responsible for the patient test or specimen (**The handoff trainee**) includes:
 - Initiating the handoff
 - Providing handoff content such that the trainee assuming the patient care can provide the appropriate continuum of care.
 - Informing the attending pathologist currently assigned to the patient test or specimen of the handoff
 - Informing the test or specimen accession staff so that the appropriate trainee test or specimen assignment can be made.
 - Changing availability status in Outlook (Out of Office) or pager system to indicate Unavailable.
- **Handoff information** must include:
 - Patient identification
 - Test or specimen information sufficient to appropriate continuum of care
 - Any alerts regarding pending results
 - Need to communicate with clinicians or other individuals in the department.
- It is the responsibility of the **trainee receiving the handoff** information to make sure it is adequate for them to assume the continuum of care.
- Trainees are to comply with existing policies regarding shift responsibility, rotation changes and On Call changes.
- **Concerns about handoff** are to be communicated to the applicable Rotation Director or Division Director and the Chief Resident On Call