Section 9	Clinical Policies	04/15/97 - Originated
Subject 9.3	Patient Rights	06/09/09 - Reviewed w/ changes - Reviewed w/o changes
Policy 9.3.1	**Resources Available for Patients with Disabilities**	**Patient Services** - Author

Resources Available for Patients with Disabilities

Policy

In response to the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) of 1990, UTMB and its employees promote and maintain an environment that is accessible to patients with disabilities and that allows for effective communication regarding care. This process considers all types of disabilities including, but not limited to physical, hearing, speech, and visual impairment. Whenever possible, the disabled patient's preferred method of communication shall be given primary consideration.

The institutional ADA Coordinator supports the provision of services to disabled patients. A description of resources available for patients with disabilities is described in the patient guide which is available in Spanish and English.

Resources for Physical Impairment

As part of universal compliance to federal and state laws, physical accessibility of the environment is a primary consideration of all remodeling projects, including, but not limited to, the path of travel, restrooms, telephones, drinking fountains, and other measures.

- Patient rooms with accommodations that make them accessible to persons with physical disabilities are available.
- Accessible parking spaces are clearly marked and provided throughout the campus. All parking lots are equipped with wheelchair ramps.

Resources for Hearing Impairment

The following auxiliary aids and services are available to individuals seeking or receiving care at UTMB:

- Telephones within UTMB patient care areas are hearing-aid (telecoil) compatible
- Telephones in public areas are hearing-aid compatible, (telecoil).
- Telecommunications Relay Services (Relay Texas) provides communication between TTY users and hearing persons. This service is available 24 hours a day and can be accessed by dialing 9-711 from phones within the UTMB telephone network

Resources for Hearing Impairment (cont'd)

and 711 from phones that are outside of the UTMB telephone network.

- UTMB telephone operators are trained in the use of Telecommunications Relay Services and can assist with making the connection.

- Portable text telephones (commonly referred to as TTY) are available for patient use and can be obtained by contacting Patient Services, Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM. After hours and on weekends, a TTY is available for patient use by contacting the Nursing Administrator on call.

- Amplifying handsets are available for patient use and can be obtained by contacting Patient Services, Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM. After hours and on weekends, handsets are available for patient use by contacting the Nursing Administrator on call.

- All televisions are equipped with a closed caption option on the front panel of the monitor which can be enabled by the patient or visitor.

- Assistive listening devices (ALD's) are available for inpatients once the need for this type of auxiliary aid has been determined. To have a patient assessed for the appropriate use of this type of device, complete a *Request for Consultation and Report Form* in Epic.

- Certified sign language interpreters are available. With the exception of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) Hospital, these services may be obtained by calling Patient Services at extension 24772 weekdays, 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. Whenever possible, arrangements for these services should be made in advance.

Resources for Communication Impairment

The Speech Pathology Department can assist with alternative communication methods for patients with speech and language impairments. To initiate a patient assessment related to a communication impairment, complete a *Request for Consultation and Report Form* in Epic.

Additional Information

Requests for resources or accommodations not addressed in this document should be directed to the Institutional ADA Coordinator. Complaints, lack of available resources, or treatment that is perceived as a failure to comply with this policy should be reported to the Patient Services Department or the Institutional ADA Coordinator.

References

Institutional *Handbook of Operating Procedures* policy:
Policy 3.2.2 Americans with Disabilities Act
Policy 9.3.13, *Patient Rights*