Handling Inquiries

Audience: All personnel in the Sleep Disorder Center.

Purpose: Specific procedures for handling inquiries assure consistency of responses and contribute to customer satisfaction and professional image.

Policy: All inquiries will be responded to in an appropriate and timely manner. The phone will be answered immediately. Overflow phone calls will go into voicemail, which must be checked after each phone call or upon return to the office. Adequate staff will be available to respond to inquiries, and appropriate responses and informational materials will be provided.

Procedure:

Phone Calls

All phone calls will be answered with the standard greeting, "Hello, sleep disorders center, this is (name). How may I help you?" During the day from 0830 to 1630, the phones are answered by the Sleep Lab Coordinator (UTMB Galveston) or the Patient Service Specialist (Victory Lakes Town Center). After hours, there is an answering machine to take messages. Any messages on the answering machine are played back at the first opportunity. Every attempt must be made to respond on the same day that messages are received.

The person answering the phone will try to answer the caller's questions. If the caller's question cannot be answered, then the following options for forwarding the call are available:

1. Technical or sleep study questions are transferred to the daytime polysomonographer:
   - 832-505-2360
2. Medical questions are referred to the appropriate sleep professional staff member:
   - Shahzad Jokhio, M.D Cell: (832) 701-5378
   - Thomas Speer, PhD Cell: (832) 528-2824
3. All other questions are transferred to the Program Manager, Denise McElyea:
   - Office: 409-772-5120
   - Cell: 409-392-4645

If the appropriate individual is not available to take the call, then a message is taken with the caller's name and call-back number.

Common phone inquiries and how they are handled are listed below:

- Patient consult – if the caller wants to schedule a patient consult, the caller will be advised to enter an order for a Pulmonary Medicine consult in Epic (inpatient status). If the patient is an outpatient, the caller will be directed/ transferred to the appropriate Patient Service Specialist to schedule the first available appointment with a sleep center physician.
- Direct referral – if the caller wants to schedule a direct referral for a sleep study, the caller will be asked to mail or fax a current medical history and physical for review by the medical director or a designated sleep staff physician prior to scheduling a sleep study. The fax number is:
    - Patient Service Specialist (PSS)
        - Fax: 281-337-0704
- Follow-up – if the caller wants to schedule a follow-up appointment, the caller will be directed/ transferred to the appropriate Patient Service Specialist to schedule the first available appointment with a sleep center physician.
- Reschedule – if the caller wants to reschedule a sleep study, he or she will be offered the next available opening and the existing appointment will be cancelled.

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Shahzad Jokhio, M.D.
Medical Director