Guidelines for Performing Electrocardiograms

**Purpose**
To standardize the role and training of Respiratory Care Services staff performing EKG's.

**Scope**
Respiratory Care Services will assist the Heart Station department by performing EKG's. (This will reduce response time and improve the timelines of patient care.)

**Accountability/Training**
- Licensed Respiratory Care Practitioners
- Trained by Heart Station Personnel and completed check-offs with EKG technician.

**Equipment and Supplies**
- EKG machine
- Adhesive electrodes
- Epic order/printed request for EKG

**Procedure**

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<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Prepare the patient (see Section II of Operator's Guide). <strong>Remember:</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Verify patient using two identifiers.&lt;br&gt;• Explain procedure.&lt;br&gt;• Ask patient to relax, be still and quiet.&lt;br&gt;• Female patients appreciate privacy.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Position electrodes:&lt;br&gt;VI - Fourth intercostal space at right Border of Sternum.&lt;br&gt;V2 - Fourth intercostal space at left Border of Sternum.&lt;br&gt;V3 - Midway between positions 2 and 4.&lt;br&gt;V4 - At the mid-clavicular line and the inter-space in which the apex is located (the 5th intercostal space is used if the apex is not palpable).&lt;br&gt;V5 - At the anterior axillary line on the same horizontal level as V4.&lt;br&gt;V6 - At the mid-axillary line on the same horizontal level as V4 and V5.</td>
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Note: Unlike limb electrodes, which can be placed anywhere on the arms or legs, the chest electrodes should be placed no more than a quarter of an inch (6mm) away from the designated location.
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Procedure
Continued

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| 3    | Type information:  
|      | - Patient information per prompts.  
|      | - Unit history number  
|      | - Tech ID  |
| 4    | Initiate EKG (see Section III of Operator's Guide).  |
|      | Note:  
|      | - When an EKG is performed, the time printed on the EKG should be transposed onto the request.  
|      | - One copy should be made of all EKG's and kept with the request.  
|      | - Respiratory Care Services staff will perform STAT EKG’s from 1700 – 0500 and on weekends for UTMB and the Shriners Hospital.  
|      | - The Heart Station will pick up the EKG's and requests for the previous 24-hour period daily.  |

Infection Control
Follow procedures outlined in Healthcare Epidemiology Policies and Procedures #2.24; Respiratory Care Services.

References

The Journal of Interesting EKGs, http://www.ekgreading.com/


Dean Jenkins, Stephen Gerred, ECGs by Example, Churchhill Livingston, Published 1997, http://www.ecglibrary.com/ecgsbyeg.html