### 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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| 1    | Prepare the patient (see Section II of Operator's Guide). **Remember:**  
- Verify patient using two identifiers.  
- Explain procedure.  
- Ask patient to relax, be still and quiet.  
- Female patients appreciate privacy. |
| 2    | Position electrodes:  
- VI - Fourth intercostal space at right Border of Sternum.  
- V2 - Fourth intercostal space at left Border of Sternum.  
- V3 - Midway between positions 2 and 4.  
- 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).  
- V5 - At the anterior axillary line on the same horizontal level as V4.  
- V6 - At the mid-axillary line on the same horizontal level as V4 and V5. |

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**  

**References**  

