



MONTANA STATE HOSPITAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

D Unit Outdoor Exercise Yard and Courtyards

Effective Date: November 24, 2015

Policy #: FP-07

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I. PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for use of the D Unit Outdoor Exercise yard and Courtyards

II. POLICY:

- A. It is the right of Montana State Hospital patients, absent medical contraindications, to have regular and frequent access to secure outdoor areas for the purpose of getting exercise and fresh air.
- B. Because D Unit houses patients with higher levels of security needs than other treatment units, specific procedures must be followed when providing patients with access to outdoor areas to prevent an escape or other problems that could jeopardize safety of patients, staff, and the public.
- C. Exercise and courtyard areas are only available for use during the daytime. These areas may not be accessed by patients after the patient curfew hours established for campus pass (adjusted seasonally). Staff may not access these areas after curfew hours except for security or maintenance purposes.
- D. Treatment Teams may request restraint individual patients' access to outdoor areas as needed to ensure appropriate security and safety of staff, other patients, and the public.

III. DEFINITIONS:

- A. Outdoor Exercise Yard – The large fenced exercise yard adjacent to D Unit accessed through one of the D Unit courtyards.
- B. Courtyard – The two enclosed outdoor areas adjacent to the D Unit day room.
- C. Main Control – The office or nursing station from which access to the unit is controlled and security video monitors are located.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES: All hospital staff assigned to work on D Unit and all hospital security staff are responsible for carrying out policy and procedure prescribed herein.

V. PROCEDURE:

- A. Immediately before patients are given access to either the exercise yard or a courtyard, staff will inspect the fence ensuring integrity of the fence and related security apparatus. The yard and/or courtyard area will also be inspected looking

for contraband, safety problems, or anything that appears to be out of place or out of the ordinary. The area must be thoroughly inspected and considered safe before patients are permitted to access the area.

- B. The exercise yard and courtyards must also be inspected after activities are completed and patients have been returned to the unit. This inspection must also check the fence and security apparatus for integrity and ensure nothing is out of place and all equipment and supplies are put away.
- C. Security Officers will inspect the exterior Outdoor Exercise Yard fence and gate on a daily basis and note the inspection and significant observations or findings in the Daily Security Log.
- D. Staff supervising the outdoor exercise yard will:
 - 1. Maintain regular radio communications with each other and Main Control while patients are using the Outdoor Exercise Yard.
 - 2. Ensure at least two staff members are in the yard when it is used by patients. Staff will circulate throughout the area and avoid congregating in one place or being distracted. Staff must be physically present in the exercise yard, not watching from one of the courtyards.
 - 3. Notify Hospital Security Officers prior to permitting patient access to the Outdoor Exercise Yard. Security Officers will assist by patrolling outside of the yard or also circulating inside the yard to the extent their other duties permit.
 - 4. Maintain records of patients using the Outdoor Exercise Yard, tracking time, activities, patient participation, and names of supervising staff. Patient participation will be recorded in the same manner used for other activities.
 - 5. Notify Main Control when a patient wishes to return to the unit.
 - 6. Terminate Outdoor Exercise Yard activities in the event of emergency situations requiring D Unit staff to respond to incidents in the yard, on the unit, or elsewhere in the hospital.
- E. Patients using the Outdoor Exercise Yard or Courtyard will:
 - 1. Wear appropriate seasonal clothing. Shirts and footwear must be worn.
 - 2. Behave appropriately, avoiding rough horseplay, foul, or abusive language, or engaging in conversations with people outside of the fence.

3. Refrain from touching, climbing, shaking, playing with, or otherwise disturbing the fence. Patients may be asked to move away from the fence or go indoors if staff has any concerns about a patient disturbing the integrity or security features of the fence.

F. The D Unit treatment team may establish specific procedures governing Outdoor Exercise Yard access or Courtyard access for individual patients or groups. This could include, but is not limited to separate access for certain individuals, segregated access for men and women, individual access, one-to-one staffing, or specific staff-patient ratios.

G. Supervisory personnel may give staff more detailed instructions about using these areas and maintaining security than that specified in this policy/procedure.

VI. REFERENCES: None.

VII. COLLABORATED WITH: Hospital Administrator, Associate Hospital Administrator, Medical Director, Director of Nursing, Assistant Director of Nursing, Safety Officer, Forensic Treatment Team, Recreation Department

VIII. RESCISSIONS: FP-07, D Unit Outdoor Exercise Yard and Courtyard dated November 19, 2009.

IX. DISTRIBUTION: All hospital policy manuals

X. ANNUAL REVIEW AND AUTHORIZATION: This policy is subject to annual review and authorization for use by either the Administrator or the Medical Director with written documentation of the review per ARM § 37-106-330.

XI. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY: D Unit Program Manager

XII. ATTACHMENTS: None

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John Glueckert Date
Hospital Administrator