

Code of Conduct

Compliance and Privacy



The heart and science of medicine.

THE
University of Vermont
HEALTH NETWORK

Porter Medical Center

This Code of Conduct has been adopted by the Board of Directors of The University of Vermont Health Network - The UVM Health Network- Porter Medical Center to provide standards by which all individuals participating in The University of Vermont Health Network- The UVM Health Network- Porter Medical Center 's operations will conduct themselves in order to protect and promote integrity and the ability to achieve its mission and to perform daily activities in accordance with federal, state and local rules and regulations.





*I am the heart and
science of medicine.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Application of the Code	1
Introduction	1
Principles and Standards	2
Principle 1 - Legal Compliance	2
Standard 1.1 – Antitrust	2
Standard 1.2 -Tax	2
Standard 1.3 -Fraud and Abuse	2
Standard 1.4 -Lobbying/Political Activity	2
Standard 1.5 -Environmental	3
Standard 1.6 -Workplace Discrimination, Harassment & Violence	3
Standard 1.7 -(Reserved)	4
Standard 1.8 -Professional Licenses, Certifications and Credentials	4
Standard 1.9 - Substance Abuse and Controlled Substances	4
Standard 1.10 - Safety Precautions/Work Environment	5
Standard 1.11 - Records and Reports	5
Principle 2 - Patient and Resident Compliance	5
Standard 2.1 - Confidentiality of Patient and Resident Information	5
Standard 2.2 - Emergency Medical Treatment	6
Standard 2.3 - Patient and Resident Rights	6
Principle 3 – Business Ethics	6
Standard 3.1- Honest Communication	7

TABLE OF CONTENTS– CONTINUED

Standard 3.2 - Misappropriation of Proprietary Information.....	7
Standard 3.3 - Record Retention.....	7
Principle 4 - Confidentiality	7
Standard 4.1 - Proprietary Information	7
Standard 4.2 - Human Resource Actions/Decisions	8
Standard 4.3 -Medical Staff Information	8
Principle 5 - Conflicts of Interest	8
Standard 5.1 - Outside Financial Interest	8
Standard 5.2 -Services for Competitors/Vendors	9
Standard 5.3 - Participation on Board of Directors/Trustees	9
Standard 5.4 - Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statements	10
Principle 6 - Business Relationships	10
Standard 6.1 -Gifts and Gratuities	10
Standard 6.2 -Workshops, Seminars and Training Sessions	10
Standard 6.3 - Contracting	10
Standard 6.4 - Business Inducements	10
Principle 7 - Protection of Assets	11
Standard 7.1- Internal Controls	11
Standard 7.2 - Financial Reporting	11
Standard 7.3 -Travel and Entertainment	11
Standard 7.4 - Personal Use of Corporate Assets	11
Principle 8 - Reports and Response	12
Standard 8.1 – Reporting	12
Standard 8.2 - Investigation	12
Standard 8.3 - Response	12
Standard 8.4 - Non-Retaliation	13
Principle 9 - Pre-Engagement Investigations	13
Administration of the Code	15

APPLICATION OF THE CODE

The UVM Health Network- Porter Medical Center expects each individual to whom this Code of Conduct applies to follow the Principles and Standards set forth below and to conduct the business and affairs of PMC according to these Principles. This Code of Conduct is a general statement of policy and is not intended to replace, modify, amend or limit existing or future policies of PMC relating to the matters addressed here. Where specific policies or Compliance Standards of PMC exist that require stricter actions or provide additional guidance on any of the areas addressed in this Code of Conduct, the more specific policies shall apply.

Nothing in this Code of Conduct shall be interpreted as providing any additional employment or contractual rights to employees or other persons.

While PMC will communicate changes at the time of or prior to the implementation of such changes, PMC reserves the right to modify, amend or alter this Code of Conduct without notice to any person or employee.

INTRODUCTION

The Code of Conduct contains Principles outlining the policy of PMC and Standards that are intended to provide guidance to all individuals participating in PMC's operations. The Principles and Standards shall be distributed at least annually to all directors, officers, employees, agents, and others participating in PMC's operations. Individuals are responsible to ensure that their behavior and activity is consistent with the Code of Conduct.

As used in this Code of Conduct, "PMC" means The UVM Health Network- Porter Medical Center and its affiliated organizations. The term "individuals" includes directors, employees and agents of PMC and any person who fills such a role or provides services on behalf of PMC including non-employed members of PMC's Medical Staff providing services in PMC, non-physician practitioners exercising privileges in PMC, interns and students and volunteers in PMC.

PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS

The following Standards are intended to provide guidance to assist individuals in their obligations to comply with applicable laws. Individuals are required to comply with all applicable laws, whether or not specifically addressed in this Code of Conduct. If questions regarding the existence, interpretation, or application of any laws arise, they should be directed to the PMC Compliance Officer.

PRINCIPLE 1

LEGAL COMPLIANCE

PMC will strive to assure all activity by or on behalf of PMC is in compliance with applicable laws.

Standard 1.1 - Antitrust

All individuals must comply with applicable antitrust and similar laws that regulate competition. Examples of conduct prohibited by the law include (1) agreements to fix prices, bid rigging and collusion (including price sharing) with competitors; (2) boycotts, price discrimination agreements and certain unwarranted exclusive dealing agreements; and (3) unfair trade practices including bribery, misappropriation of trade secrets, deception, intimidation and similar unfair practices. Individuals are expected to seek advice from the PMC Compliance Officer when confronted with business decisions involving a risk of violation of the antitrust laws.

Standard 1.2 - Tax

As a nonprofit tax-exempt entity, PMC has a legal and ethical obligation to act in compliance with applicable laws, to engage in activities that support its charitable purpose and to ensure that its resources are used for the good of the community rather than the private or personal interests of any individual. Individuals will follow the "open admission" policies of PMC that state that services will be provided to individuals in need of such services without regard to the person's ability to pay. This helps PMC fulfill its charitable, tax-exempt mission.

Standard 1.3 - Fraud and Abuse

Individuals are expected to refrain from conduct that may violate the fraud and abuse laws. These laws prohibit (1) direct, indirect or disguised payments in exchange for the referral of patients and residents; (2) the submission of false, fraudulent or misleading claims to any government entity or third-party payor, including claims for services not rendered, or claims that describe the service differently than the service actually rendered, or claims which do not otherwise comply with applicable program or contractual requirements; and (3) making false representations to any person or entity in order to gain or retain participation in a program or to obtain payment for any service.

Standard 1.4 – Lobbying/Political Activity

PMC expects all individuals to refrain from engaging in activity that would endanger the tax-exempt status of the organization including a variety of lobbying and political activities.

1. No individual may make any agreement to contribute money, property or services of PMC to any political candidate, party, organization or committee. While individuals may personally participate in and contribute to political organizations or campaigns, they must do so as individuals, not as representatives of PMC, and they must use their own funds.
2. Where PMC's experience contributes to the understanding of public issues that have a relationship to the operations of PMC, PMC may offer recommendations through industry organizations or in selected public forums provided that any such recommendations shall be expressed solely by individuals authorized to do so by PMC's governing board.

All such contacts and transactions will be conducted in an honest and ethical manner. Any attempt to influence the decision-making process of governmental bodies or officials by an improper benefit or payment is not allowed. Any requests or demands by any governmental representative for any improper payment or benefit will be immediately reported to the PMC Compliance Officer.

Standard 1.5 - Environmental

It is the policy of PMC to manage and operate its business in a manner that respects the environment and conserves natural resources. Individuals shall utilize resources appropriately and efficiently, recycle where required and otherwise store and dispose of all waste in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Individuals will notify appropriate PMC officers of any instances of environmental contamination and will cooperate with appropriate authorities to correct any environmental contamination for which PMC may be responsible.

Standard 1.6 - Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, Violence & Disruptive Conduct

PMC believes that fair and equitable treatment of employees and other persons is critical to fulfilling our mission.

It is our policy to recruit, hire, train, promote, assign, transfer, discipline, layoff, recall and terminate employees based on their own ability, achievement, experience and conduct without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, place of birth, age, national origin, disability, ancestry, a positive test from an HIV-related blood test, genetic information, pregnancy, military service or obligation, citizenship or immigration status, their having asserted a claim for workers compensation, or any other classification protected by law.

No form of harassment or discrimination will be permitted. Each claim of harassment or discrimination shall be promptly investigated in accordance with applicable policies of The UVM Health Network- Porter Medical Center .

PMC is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for patients, residents, visitors and staff. All individuals are responsible for maintaining a respectful workplace that is free of violence, intimidation, and harassment. Workplace threats of physical violence, coercion, intimidation or harassment will not be tolerated. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to, behavior such as attacks and threats (verbal, written and/or physical) directed at others, shouting or using vulgar, profane, inappropriate or abusive language, writing of malicious or inappropriate comments in a medical record or other written documents, inappropriate expressions of anger such as destruction of

property, throwing objects, interfering with the work performance of another staff member, threatening, intimidating or coercing another staff member, physical assault or other criminal acts, refusal to perform assigned tasks, and conduct that demeans the dignity of any person(s) or disrupts the ability to provide safe, quality patient and resident care. PMC reserves discretion to evaluate a person's conduct and its effect on others under this section and to take disciplinary action related to this section.

Harassment in the workplace (including sexual harassment), as defined by applicable law and PMC's policies, will not be tolerated. Harassment, including sexual harassment, is a form of misconduct that undermines the employment relationship, adversely affects employee morale, and interferes with work productivity. Violation of PMC's Prohibition of Discrimination and Sexual Harassment policies or other related policies will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or other action/sanctions in accordance with applicable policies. PMC reserves discretion to evaluate a person's conduct and its effect on others under this section and to take disciplinary action related to this section.

In accordance with PMC policy, any individual on PMC property must not bring firearms, explosive devices, illicit drugs, or any other dangerous material on PMC property. Violation of related policies will lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination or other action/sanctions in accordance with applicable policies.

Individuals who witness any form of violent threats or acts are required to report the conduct to assure prompt action and investigation in accordance with applicable policies of The UVM Health Network- Porter Medical Center .

Retaliation against a person who has in good faith filed, supported, or participated in an investigation of a complaint or report under this section is prohibited. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, ostracizing the person, pressuring the person to drop or not support the complaint or report, or participate in an investigation, or adversely affecting that person's work environment.

Standard 1.7 [Reserved]

Standard 1.8 - Professional Licenses, Certifications and Credentials

Individuals who are required to maintain professional licenses, certifications and/or credentials must maintain current status and must comply with all federal, state and local regulations in their field of expertise. Individuals are responsible for presenting a current license upon employment with PMC and at renewal times, etc. by the expiration date shown on their current document. Individuals who fail to produce on-going proof of current licensure, if required by job description, will be subject to disciplinary action and shall not be permitted to work prior to producing acceptable proof of licensure renewal.

Standard 1.9 - Substance Abuse and Controlled Substances

PMC strives to maintain a work place staffed by individuals free from the effects of illegal drugs, non-prescribed controlled substances, and alcohol. The use, sale, possession or being under the influence of intoxicating, non-prescribed legally controlled substances, or illegal substances while performing job duties, while on PMC premises, or operating PMC equipment is prohibited.

Violation of related policies and procedures may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

This Standard is not meant to prohibit the appropriate use of over-the-counter medication or other legally prescribed medication, to the extent that it does not impair a staff member's ability to safety or effectively perform their job, or the safety of others. At times individuals may need to take prescription or over the counter medications that could impair their job performance. Individuals in this situation must notify employee health prior to commencing work, if their medication(s) could impair their ability to safely perform their job duties.

Standard 1.10 - Safety Precautions/Work Environment

PMC is dedicated to providing a safe environment for its patients, residents and employees. Accordingly, all individuals are expected to comply with laws and regulations regarding the maintenance of a safe work environment and the maintenance of an environment favorable to the safety and well-being of patients and residents and others in the facilities of PMC. Individuals are expected to adhere to all health and safety code requirements; fire and panic code requirements, OSHA requirements and observe other required safety precautions, including but not limited to, those relating to the handling, treatment and disposition of hazardous, toxic or infectious materials.

Standard 1.11 - Records and Reports

PMC requires the prompt and thorough completion of all records and reports required by law or regulation regarding the operations of PMC and the provision of services to its patients and residents. These activities include, but are not limited to, patient and resident medical records, records and reports of the storage and use of controlled substances and reports of disciplinary procedures regarding members of PMC's Medical Staff. Individuals shall ensure that all records and reports accurately reflect the facts and circumstances of the matters recorded or reported upon and that all records and reports are submitted on time.

PRINCIPLE 2

PATIENT AND RESIDENT COMPLIANCE

Individuals will treat patients and residents with dignity and respect, while providing quality care in accordance with federal, state and local regulations.

Standard 2.1 – Confidentiality of Patient and Resident Information

All individuals have an obligation to conduct themselves in accordance with the principle of maintaining the confidentiality of patient and resident information in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. Individuals shall refrain from revealing any personal or confidential information concerning patients and residents unless supported by legitimate business or patient and resident care purposes. If questions arise regarding an obligation to maintain the confidentiality of information or the appropriateness of releasing information, individuals shall seek guidance from PMC's Compliance Officer.

Standard 2.2 - Emergency Medical Treatment

PMC must comply with the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) when providing emergency medical care. All persons entering the emergency room, or on PMC premises, requesting a medical exam will receive a medical screening to determine if an emergency medical condition exists. If one exists, the patient and resident will be provided medical treatment to stabilize the condition, or when warranted, be transferred to another healthcare facility. All persons will receive a medical screening without regard to insurance coverage and/or their ability to pay.

Standard 2.3 - Patient and Resident Rights

It is the policy of PMC to treat patients and residents without regard to the race, color, religion, gender or sexual orientation, gender identity, place of birth, age, ethnic origin, disability, source of payment, or any other classification protected by law. In addition, patients and residents have various rights, which include but are not limited to:

1. To receive considerate, respectful and medically necessary care.
2. To receive information on how we will use their personal health information.
3. To know the names and roles of everyone who cares for them.
4. To receive information about his or her diagnosis, treatment and possible medical outcome in layman's terms.
5. To refuse any treatment or medications as permitted by law.
6. To be informed of hospital policies and practices that relate to patient and resident care, treatment and responsibilities.
7. To privacy.
8. To expect his or her doctor to coordinate care.
9. To have an Advance Directive.
10. To a full explanation of his or her hospital bill and to information about financial aid for healthcare.

Further, all individuals will comply with the regulations regarding the "treatment and transfer of patients and residents, the recognition of patient and resident choice and the recognition of patient and resident rights."

PRINCIPLE 3 BUSINESS ETHICS

In order to promote PMC's commitment to high standards of business ethics and integrity, individuals will accurately and honestly represent PMC in business transactions on behalf of PMC and will not engage in any activity intended to defraud anyone of money, property or services.

The Standards set forth below are designed to provide guidance to ensure that PMC's business activities reflect high standards of business ethics and integrity.

Standard 3.1 - Honest Communication

PMC requires openness and honesty from individuals in the performance of their job responsibilities and in communication with others in connection with their job duties. Individuals shall not make false or misleading statements to any patient, resident, person or entity doing business with PMC about other patients and residents, persons or entities doing business or competing with PMC or about the products or services of PMC or its competitors.

Standard 3.2 - Misappropriation of Proprietary Information

Individuals shall not take confidential or proprietary information belonging to another person or entity without permission nor use any publication, document, computer program, information or product in violation of a third party's interest. Individuals are responsible to ensure that they do not improperly copy, for their own use, documents, computer programs, or other media in violation of applicable copyright laws or licensing agreements. Individuals shall not use confidential

business information obtained from competitors of PMC including customer or patient lists, price lists, contracts or other information in violation of any agreement not to compete, prior employment agreement or in any other manner likely to provide an unfair competitive advantage to PMC.

Standard 3.3 - Record Retention

Legal and regulatory standards require the retention of certain records for various periods of time. All medical and business records developed in PMC operations shall be retained according to accepted standards particularly in the following areas: health information, patient and resident accounting, tax, personnel, health and safety, environmental, contract, and administration. No records or files may be destroyed when there is pending or imminent litigation, government investigation or audit. Destruction of records in these situations may constitute a criminal offense. Employees must consult PMC's various record retention policies before the destruction of any records and/or files.

PRINCIPLE 4 CONFIDENTIALITY

Individuals will maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information in accordance with applicable legal and ethical standards.

Individuals engaged in the operations of PMC are in possession of and have access to a broad variety of confidential, sensitive and proprietary information. Each individual has an obligation to actively protect and safeguard confidential, sensitive and proprietary information in a manner designed to prevent the unauthorized disclosure of information.

Standard 4.1 - Proprietary Information

Information and ideas are property assets of PMC and are important to its organizational success. Information pertaining to PMC's trade secrets, technology, financial operations (such as rates, rate lists, costs, contracts for services) shall be protected and shared only with individuals having a need to know such information in order to perform their job responsibilities. This includes, but is not

limited to, competitive position or business strategies, payment and reimbursement information, financial and accounting information, information relating to contracts, agreements and negotiations with third parties, internal reports, policies, procedures, or other internal business-related confidential communications. Individuals shall exercise care to ensure that the property rights; patents; trademarks; copyrights and licenses acquired or owned by PMC are carefully maintained and managed to preserve and protect their value.

Standard 4.2 - Human Resources Records

Each employee's personnel file is maintained by the Human Resources Department. Access to an employee's personnel file is restricted pursuant to PMC's Employee Information policy and must be authorized by Human Resources. PMC supervisors are expected to maintain the confidentiality of employee disciplinary matters and personnel information, except in the course and scope of performing their job duties. This policy is not intended to preclude or dissuade employees from engaging in activities protected by state or federal law, such as discussing their wages, benefits, or other terms and conditions of employment.

Standard 4.3 – Medical Staff Information

All information relating to the appointment, clinical privileges and credentialing of members of PMC's Medical Staff and all information relating to their status and performance including, but not limited to, disciplinary actions, peer review activities, performance improvement, and utilization review activities shall be treated as confidential by the Human Resources Department and PMC supervisors. The Human Resources Department and PMC supervisors will exercise caution to prevent the release or sharing of such information except to those persons who may need such information to fulfill their job responsibilities or as may be required to complete credentialing, peer review, performance improvement, and utilization review activities, or as may be required by law.

PRINCIPLE 5 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Individuals may not use their positions to profit personally or to assist others in profiting in any way at the expense of PMC.

Individuals are expected to conduct themselves so as to avoid actual impropriety and/or the appearance of impropriety in dealing with PMC and to avoid disclosure or private use of the business affairs or plans of PMC.

Standard 5.1 - Outside Financial Interest

The following is not intended to serve as a complete description of all of the types of activities that may cause a conflict of interest. The following is intended to serve as a guide to the types of activities by an individual or a family member (spouse, parent, child, or sibling) of that individual that might cause conflicts of interest. Where a conflict of interest may exist, the conflict must be disclosed to PMC.

Ownership in or employment by an outside organization that does business with PMC. This does not apply to stock or other investments in a publicly held corporation provided that the value of the stock or other investments does not exceed five (5%) percent of the value of all of the publicly held corporation's stock. PMC may, following a review of the relevant facts, permit ownership interests that exceed those amounts if management concludes such ownership interests will not:

1. Adversely impact PMC's business interests.
2. Conduct of any business with any vendor, supplier or contractor of PMC or any of their officers or employees for the personal benefit of an individual or a member of the individual's family other than on a fair and reasonable basis.
3. Representation of PMC in any transaction in which an individual or a member of the individual's family has a significant personal interest.
4. Disclosure or use of confidential, special or inside information of or about PMC for the personal profit or advantage of an individual or a member of the individual's family.
5. Competition with PMC by an individual or a member of the individual's family, directly or indirectly, in the purchase, sale or ownership of property or property rights or interests or business investment opportunities.

Standard 5.2 - Services for Competitors/Vendors

No individual shall perform work or provide services for any competitor of PMC or for any organization with which PMC does business or which seeks to do business with PMC outside of the normal course of his/her job responsibilities with PMC without the approval of PMC. No individual shall be a director, officer or consultant of such an organization or permit his/her name to be used in any fashion that would tend to indicate a business connection with such organization without the approval of PMC. For the purposes of this provision, a "competitor of PMC" shall mean any individual, organization or entity providing inpatient and resident or outpatient and resident medical services to patients and residents residing within the service area of PMC similar to the services provided by PMC. Notwithstanding such meaning, such term shall not apply to The UVM Health Network- Porter Medical Center , Inc. or a non-employed member of PMC's Medical Staff providing medical services to patients and residents in his or her private office, nor shall the prohibition contained in this Standard prohibit any non-employed member of PMC's Medical Staff from providing medical services as a member of the Medical Staff of a competing health care facility.

Standard 5.3 - Participation on Board of Directors/Trustees

1. An individual must obtain approval of the PMC Compliance Officer prior to serving as a member of the Board of Directors/Trustees of any organization whose interests may conflict with those of PMC. An individual who is asked or seeks to serve on the Board of Directors/Trustees of any organization whose interest would not impact PMC (e.g., civic, charitable, fraternal, etc.) will not be required to obtain approval.
2. Individuals shall seek the approval of the PMC Compliance Officer prior to retaining any fees or compensation (other than reimbursement for expenses) that are received by the individual for board services which may have been rendered during normal paid work time as an employee of PMC.

Standard 5.4 - Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statements

Individuals shall, at the request of PMC, disclose outside activities that may be in conflict with the best interests of PMC on annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statements.

PRINCIPLE 6

BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS

Business transactions with vendors, contractors and other third parties shall be conducted free from offers or requests for gifts and favors or other improper inducements in exchange for influence or assistance in a transaction. The Standards set forth below are intended to guide individuals in determining the appropriateness of the listed activities or behaviors with vendors, providers, contractors, third-party payors and governmental entities.

Standard 6.1 - Gifts and Gratuities

It is PMC's desire to, at all times, preserve and protect its reputation and to avoid the appearance of impropriety.

1. Individuals are not allowed to solicit tips, personal gratuities or gifts from patients and residents. Individuals may accept non-monetary gifts of a nominal value from patients and residents; however, if a patient and resident or other individual wishes to present a monetary gift he/she shall be referred to the Development Office of PMC.
2. Individuals are not allowed to solicit gifts, favors, services, entertainment or other items of value from vendors, suppliers, individuals or entities seeking to contract with PMC. Similarly, the offer or giving of gifts, favors, services or other items of value with the expectation of influencing any vendor, supplier, customer, government official or other person by PMC is not allowed. Individuals may accept only non-monetary gifts of a nominal value.

Standard 6.2 - Workshops, Seminars and Training Sessions

Attendance at vendor-sponsored workshops, seminars and training sessions is permitted.

Attendance at vendor expense to out-of-town seminars, workshops and training sessions is permitted only with the approval of the PMC Compliance Officer.

Standard 6.3 - Contracting

All business relations with vendors, suppliers, contractors, or other persons must be conducted on a fair and reasonable basis in compliance with PMC policies and procedures. Individuals must make known personal relationships and business activities with vendors, suppliers, contractors or other persons that could be interpreted as influencing the individual's performance or duties for PMC to the Compliance Officer.

Standard 6.4 - Business Inducements

Individuals shall not seek to gain any advantage for PMC by the improper use of payments, business courtesies or other inducements. Offering, giving, soliciting or receiving any form of bribe or other

improper payment is prohibited. Appropriate rebates, discounts and allowances are customary and acceptable business practices provided they are approved by PMC, and they do not represent illegal or unethical payments. Any such payments must be reasonable in value, competitively justified and properly documented. Any such inducements shall not be made to or received from individual employees or agents of business entities. In addition, individuals may provide non-monetary gifts of a nominal value and entertainment and meals of a nominal value to current and prospective business partners of PMC when such activities are reasonable and consistent with all applicable laws. Individuals must not offer a government employee any meals, entertainments or gifts that would violate applicable laws and regulations.

PRINCIPLE 7 PROTECTION OF ASSETS

All individuals will strive to preserve and protect PMC's assets by making efficient and effective use of PMC resources and properly and accurately reporting its financial condition.

Standard 7.1 – Internal Controls

The Standards set forth below are intended to ensure that PMC assets are protected and properly used and that financial records and reports are accurate and reliable. All individuals shall have the responsibility for maintaining and complying with required internal controls.

Standard 7.2 - Financial Reporting

All financial reports, accounting records, purchase orders, expense accounts, time sheets and other documents must be accurate. Improper or fraudulent accounting or documentation of financial reporting is contrary to the policies of PMC and may be in violation of applicable laws.

Standard 7.3 - Travel and Entertainment

Travel and entertainment expenses must be consistent with the individual's job responsibilities and PMC's needs and resources. Individuals must comply with all PMC policies relating to travel and entertainment expense. Individuals are expected to exercise reasonable judgment in the use of PMC's assets and to spend PMC's assets as carefully as they would spend their own.

Standard 7.4 – Personal Use of Corporate Assets

All individuals are expected to refrain from converting assets of PMC (equipment, supplies, materials, or services) to personal use. All business on behalf of PMC shall be conducted in manner designed to further PMC's interest rather than the personal interests of an individual. Individuals are not permitted to use or take PMC's equipment, supplies, materials or services for personal use unless authorized to do so.

PRINCIPLE 8

REPORTS AND RESPONSE

PMC cannot fulfill its commitments to comply with all applicable laws and maintain high standards of business ethics and integrity unless detected violations are promptly recognized and corrected.

The following Standards are intended to provide guidance to individuals who detect or discover possible violations of this Code of Conduct, published Compliance Standards or existing and future PMC policies so that corrective action may be taken.

Standard 8.1 - Reporting

Individuals are expected to promptly report detected or suspected misconduct or offenses to their Department Director, who shall, in turn, report the same to the Compliance Officer of PMC. Where reporting to one's Department Director is not appropriate considering the nature of the misconduct or offense detected, the individual shall report to the Compliance Officer of PMC. Individuals may also report detected or suspected misconduct by contacting the Compliance Hotline. This may be used for individuals who are uncertain whether an action is in violation of the Code or for individuals who would like to communicate with the organization in a confidential or anonymous basis. The Compliance Hotline toll-free telephone number is (800) 401-8004, the website reporting address is <http://www.lighthouse-services.com/portermedical>, the e-mail reporting address is reports@lighthouse-services.com and the Fax reporting number is (215) 689-3885. To the greatest extent possible, all reports will be treated as highly confidential by those making and receiving the reports. No conclusions shall be formed until reports have been investigated and validated.

Standard 8.2 - Investigation

Detected and uncorrected misconduct can seriously endanger the legal status of PMC. Accordingly, the Compliance Officer of PMC will promptly investigate all reported or suspected misconduct so that appropriate steps necessary to correct the problem can be undertaken as soon as possible. Investigations may also be prompted by variations from normal trends and patterns established by prior monitoring and auditing activities. Investigations into Code of Conduct claims of misconduct include interviews and review of relevant documents and the engagement of PMC legal counsel where necessary. The PMC Compliance Officer may delegate portions of the investigation to other staff members.

Standard 8.3 - Response

Immediate response to verified claims of misconduct is required. Appropriate response may vary from situation to situation; however, if disciplinary action is necessary, such action should be immediate and imposed in accordance with PMC's written disciplinary policies. Where the verified misconduct either violates criminal laws or violates civil or administrative laws, prompt reporting to authorities will demonstrate PMC's good faith and willingness to correct the problem. This action may be considered a factor in determining any criminal administrative penalties imposed. Accordingly, prompt notification to authorities shall be made and overpayments, if any, repaid as required by law.

Standard 8.4 - Non-Retaliation

Individuals may be reluctant to report detected or suspected misconduct or offenses if the individual believes that he/she will be subject to negative consequences or retaliation. Accordingly, it is the policy of PMC that no discrimination or retaliation will be permitted against

any individual reporting detected or suspected misconduct or offenses. Individuals are expected to report any instances of discrimination or retaliation resulting from an individual making a report. In the event that an individual intentionally makes a false or misleading report, PMC reserves the right to take corrective and disciplinary action against the individual making the report.

PRINCIPLE 9

PRE-ENGAGEMENT INVESTIGATIONS

The risk that misconduct may occur will be substantially reduced if individuals are appropriately screened prior to employment or engagement by PMC.

Within the limitations of the law, PMC shall investigate the character and background of individuals and companies proposed for employment by or engagement by PMC. This would apply to positions for which substantial discretionary authority exists. Individuals may refer to available resources and data bases including, but not limited to, the National Practitioner Data Bank, Medicare sanction records, contract or debarment lists and other resources of inquiry into the person's or company's background or employment history.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE CODE

Failure to abide by this Code of Conduct or the guidelines for behavior that the Code of Conduct represents may lead to disciplinary action. PMC will weigh relevant facts and circumstances in evaluating alleged violations of this Code of Conduct. Discipline may, at PMC's discretion, range from verbal correction to termination in accordance with employment policies of PMC.

COMPLIANCE AND PRIVACY

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Porter Medical Center



UVMHealth.org/PMC

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