1/21/12

Hello All,

Recently there has been some confusion around biomedical waste (red bag waste). For clarification, no protected health information (PHI) is allowed to be disposed of in a sharps bin or red bag waste. All PHI needs to be disposed of in a shred bin.

If the PHI is somehow saturated with chemicals or body fluids, then you need to ensure that you make every effort possible to remove or obscure any PHI so that it is not legible. This should occur in rare cases.

For your information, all sharps and red bag waste are autoclaved in Anchorage and then placed in the Anchorage landfill, so you can understand why we need to do a better job in protecting PHI.

Also, all body parts, pathology specimens and placentas must go into a red bio-bag if sharps are not involved and must be segregated from normal red bag waste and labeled so the EVS Department can pick it up and be aware that it is treated separately.

If you have any questions or comments, please call Jeanie Burtch.

I want to end with this information – other than the fact that this is the law and a compliance issue, I want to make you aware that both Alaska Regional and Providence were fined last year for non-compliance and the fines were in the tens of thousands of dollars.

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**Business Office Security Assessment**

On January 13, a risk assessment was conducted at MSROC Business Office at approximately 4 p.m. The assessment was conducted by Robin Thompson, Business Office Director, Paul Mitchell, Facilities Director/Safety Officer, and Matt Sparks, Plant Operations Lead. See initial assessment checklist below.

Safety concerns consist of the perceived potential risk of disgruntled patients relative to billing issues.

Perceived problems are:

1) Department is located in the lower level of the ROC and staff feels isolated;

2) We have had a significant number of staff members involved with domestic violence issues over the past few years.

Initial observations:

1) Main entrance to the department is not manned, so public can enter without staff being aware of it. No clear access to the front door.

2) No enunciating device on door to alert staff when someone enters.

3) When an incident happens, reaction of staff is to lock all doors, which potentially puts other departments at risk and is a significant customer service issue.

Recommendations:

1) Install a door enunciator to give an indication when anyone comes through the door. (Completed 1/19)

2) When considering the response to a situation, there needs to be a consistent response to domestic violence concerns. Update Workplace Violence Form to include domestic violence issues. Any domestic violence issue that is raised should immediately be reported to HR. HR is responsible for elevating the matter based on their initial evaluation.

3) Staff comments lead us to believe there is inconsistency in applying the Code Silver policy at West Valley and usage of the panic button. We propose conducting training within the next 30 days with the Safety Officer and Director and reinforcing annual training requirements with Department Director with reporting to the Safety Committee.

4) Physical layout of the facility. Propose installation of a reception counter within the public entrance to the department. The counter would provide a physical barrier between staff and the public. Panic button would be relocated to the new counter. In addition, a second barrier would be created with another panic button by the placement of a door. This would give time in a safer location until Wasilla Police Department could arrive.

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**ASHME Letter**

Hello Members,

I hope things are doing well for you professionally and personally. As the new year begins, we start our annual membership drive. As part of the American Society for Healthcare Engineers, ASHME has the goal of providing the best educational opportunities and networking support.

Over the years the organization has been blessed with membership- and sponsor-supported training programs. This year our goal is to exceed last year’s offerings by having our annual conference on May 3-4. We are planning on having several nationally-recognized speakers this year, to include some non-maintenance presentations focusing on security, environmental services and other support areas.

This year’s meeting will be available by teleconference for those unable to attend. The two days will be packed with educational topics and a vendor fair.

Levels of membership are:

Individual membership $ 35/year

Healthcare organization $ 150/year

(includes 5 members)

Platinum sponsor $1,000/year

Gold sponsor $ 500/year

Silver sponsor $ 250/year

Please share this information with your colleagues and contacts to encourage new membership.

Thanks on behalf of the Board.

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