

University of Washington Medical Center (UWMC) is committed to providing you with the safest care. We pledge to work with you to make health care safer. National research has shown that patients and their families who are involved in their care have better outcomes.

Forming the Rapid Response Team at UWMC is one of many ways we have joined the national effort to avoid preventable deaths in hospitals.

Our Rapid Response Team has been in place since April 2006.



# Rapid Response Team

*Information for patients and family members*

*This handout explains:*

- *What a Rapid Response Team is*
- *What the team does*
- *When the team is called*
- *Warning signs to watch for that may show a patient is getting much sicker*
- *Who may call the team*
- *Tips to help create a safe health care experience*

**Questions?**

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help.

**Important UWMC Phone Numbers:**

Medical Records ..... 206-598-4344

Patient Relations ..... 206-598-8382

Pharmacy ..... 206-598-4363

UWMC Operator ..... 206-598-3300

UWMC Paging Operator (24 hours a day)..... 206-598-6190

Other: \_\_\_\_\_



*The Rapid Response Team works to make health care safer.*

## **What is a Rapid Response Team?**

A Rapid Response Team is made up of trained health care staff who are called in to help when there are signs that a patient is getting much sicker. The purpose of the team is to help before a medical emergency occurs. The team includes a doctor, a nurse trained in critical care, and a respiratory therapist.

## **What does the Rapid Response Team do?**

The Rapid Response Team acts very quickly. They may suggest lab tests, X-rays, medicines, breathing treatments, or even moving the patient to the Intensive Care Unit. The goal of this care is to help patients get better and live longer.

## **When is the Rapid Response Team called?**

Problems can happen any time a patient is in the hospital – after surgery, during medical tests, or when a patient is recovering from an illness. A call to the Rapid Response Team is made when there is a noticeable decline in the patient's health status.

## **What are the warning signs to watch for that show a patient may be getting much sicker?**

Some of the warning signs a patient may have are:

- Increased difficulty breathing
- New or different chest pain
- Confusion, restlessness, or problems thinking clearly

Or, it may be that something just does not look or seem right with the patient.

## **Who can call the Rapid Response Team?**

Any staff member can call for the Rapid Response Team. If a family member or loved one becomes aware of any decline in the patient, **tell the nurse right away.**

Or, if the medical condition changes and you feel your urgent needs are not being met, you can call the nurse in charge by calling the phone number posted in all patient rooms on the “Call for Help” poster. The nurse in charge will call in the Rapid Response Team as needed.

## **How can I help health care providers maintain a safe environment?**

Here is how the patient's family and loved ones can play a part in patient safety during the hospital stay:

- Be involved in the patient's care and report concerns.
- Know what medicines the patient takes and what they are for.
- Know the patient's medical history and treatment plans for this hospital stay.
- Help prevent the spread of infection. Always wash your hands before you enter and leave the patient's room.
- Do not visit or care for the patient if you have a fever, cough, runny nose, or other signs of illness.