

WASHINGTON COUNTY REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER  
Policy and Procedure

**TITLE: CHARITY AND INDIGENT CARE**

**POLICY:** The hospital will strive to provide assistance to the sick, and especially the poor and medically indigent, in whatever way their needs dictate and the hospital's capabilities allow.

**PURPOSE:** To have a plan for supporting the hospital's mission and philosophy that specifies decision making processes and budgetary allocations.

**PROCEDURE:**

**I. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR PATIENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

- A. Lack of medical service available at a closer facility
- B. Humanitarian and/or financial need
- C. A potentially correctable medical condition
- D. Enhancement of the hospital's relations to the community
- E. No evidence of potential misuse of charity hospitalization

**II. ASSESSMENT OF NEED**

- A. Note that the Federal Poverty Guidelines published annually in the Federal Register issued by the Department of Health and Human Services may be used to determine if a patient has the maximum allowable household income equal to or less than 125% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines in order to be deemed indigent
- B. Note that the hospital will consider patients whose household income levels are between 125% and 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines as eligible for charity care
- C. Consider other special needs cases on a one-by-one basis for charity care

**III. RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Administrator
  - 1. Includes objectives by which the care for the poor may be measured in strategic planning
  - 2. Determines if specific patient situations meet eligibility criteria as needed
  - 3. Administers the charity hospitalization plan
  - 4. Presents utilization reports to the Hospital Authority as appropriate
- B. Chief Financial Officer
  - 1. Allocates a portion of the annual budget (at least 3%) to the provision of health care for the poor
  - 2. Confines charity hospitalization to "usual and customary" hospital charges
  - 3. Refers decisions regarding physician and other support-service charges that are not usual and customary to the Administrator
  - 4. Assures that indigent and charity care are recorded to a separate account on the hospital's financial general ledger
  - 5. Prepares and submits utilization reports as deemed necessary
- C. Business Office Accounts Manager
  - 1. Obtains supporting documentation from the patient/family that may include but not be limited to copies of payroll vouchers, social security checks or payment stubs, SSI payments, Family and Children Services qualifications, etc.
  - 2. Follows approved guidelines for charity hospitalization
  - 3. Consults the Chief Financial Officer or Administrator as needed