

<b>POLICY AND PROCEDURE</b>	
Subject: <b>Patient Abuse Policy</b>	Category: Clinical
Date Approved: March 9, 2022	Date Revised: Oct 18, 2022
Author: Clinic Manager	Reviewing Body: MHC Physicians
Specific to: All Staff	Next Review Date: Oct 18, 2024

### **DATE(S) REVISED/REVIEWED SUMMARY**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments/Changes</b>
1.0	Mar 9, 2022	Initial Policy
2.0	Oct 18, 2022	Reformatted

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employees are aware that the Mapleton Health Centre maintains a zero-tolerance approach to patient abuse.

### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all employees, physicians, visitors, patients, volunteers, learners/students, and affiliates of the Mapleton Health Centre. Learners completing placements at the Mapleton Health Centre will follow the policies and procedures set out by their discipline's governing body or alternatively by their affiliated academic institution as well as the Mapleton Health Centre.

### **POLICY**

Employees are required to report any case of suspected or confirmed patient abuse in accordance with this policy and to comply with applicable legal requirements.

Abuse of patients by employees of the Mapleton Health Centre is not tolerated in any case. Employees who are found to have abused a patient as defined in this policy will be subject to disciplinary termination and will be reported to the relevant governing professional body, if applicable.

### **DEFINITION**

Abuse is the misuse of power or the betrayal of trust, respect or intimacy in the therapeutic relationship. It can take many forms, including:

- Physical (i.e., unwarranted use of physical force, confinement or restraint; pushing, shaking, or striking a patient; handling a patient roughly or administering a treatment roughly)
- Emotional (i.e., action which leaves no physical manifestation but results in emotional damage or the infliction of mental cruelty)

- Sexual (i.e., sexual harassment, assault, or molestation – this includes both consensual or non-consensual behaviour)
- Verbal (i.e., verbal abuse and/or other forms of communication which threatens the patient, causes annoyance or discomfort, and for which there is no therapeutic value)
- Financial (i.e., theft, extortion and irregularities in handling a patient’s financial affairs)
- Neglect

Abuse also include betraying the patient’s trust or violating professional boundaries or the intimacy inherent in the therapeutic relationship, when the employee knew or ought reasonably to know that the action could cause physical, emotional, or spiritual harm to the patient. Employees are expected to establish and maintain appropriate limits and boundaries in their therapeutic relationships with patients.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **Internal Reporting Process**

All employees have the obligation to report situations of suspected patient abuse. When an employee has reasonable grounds to suspect that a patient has been abused, the employee must immediately report this matter to the clinic manager or a physician at the Mapleton Health Centre in the event of conflict.

The clinic manager or physician will promptly investigate the matter, which may include identifying and interviewing the patient, witnesses and the individual who is alleged to have abused the patient, and reviewing relevant documentation as appropriate.

The clinic manager or physician shall ensure that appropriate support are offered to the patient and/or staff members involved (which might include medical assistance or counselling) and will determine whether immediate steps are necessary to protect employees, patients and others from harm.

### **External Reporting Requirements**

In addition to the internal reporting requirements set out above, employees are subject to mandatory external reporting requirements, including reporting duties pursuant to the *Child and Family Services Act*; *Regulated Health Professionals Act*; and *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*.

It is the responsibility of all employees to be familiar with relevant legislation and legal reporting requirements and to fulfill those obligations.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Employees**

All employees of the Mapleton Health Centre have a duty to report all incidents of abuse or suspected abuse.

### **Management**

Management has a responsibility to inform employees of the duty to report all cases of abuse and suspected abuse and to ensure that the proper procedures are in place to investigate such matters.



**MAPLETON**  
HEALTH CENTRE

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

11 Andrews Dr. W  
Drayton, ON N0G 1P0  
P: (519)638-3088  
F: (519)638-3982  
E: admin@mapletonhc.ca

Failure to report incidents of abuse or suspected abuse may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment (or for independent contractors, termination of contract). Where required or advisable (in the Mapleton Health Centre's sole discretion), such actions shall be reported to the appropriate governing/regulatory body.

## **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed on a biannual (every 2 years) basis to ensure its policy statements and reporting procedures remain clear, relevant, and practical for the organization. The policy will be amended as considered necessary.