PURPOSE

- It is the obligation of each employee, volunteer, student, member of the Medical Staff and Administration to protect the confidentiality of any private information which may be acquired from a patient, or from any source, about a patient. The trust that is built in an employee-patient relationship would be broken by disclosure of confidential information.

- Knowledge which is gained in a provider-patient relationship may be essential in planning the patient's care. When this is the case, the provider must use judgment to avoid improper disclosure. The provider discloses only that information which is relevant to the patient's welfare. The privacy rights of the patient must always be a paramount consideration in any decision to disclose information.

- There are times when an employee legally may be required to give testimony in court concerning confidential information about a patient. Any employee who is subpoenaed to appear in court on a facility matter shall report this fact to their supervisor immediately. In such cases, Helen Newberry Joy Hospital & Healthcare Center will arrange the appropriate legal advice and guidance.

- The importance of avoiding gossip and idle talk about Helen Newberry Joy Hospital & Healthcare Center when attending patients cannot be over emphasized. Employees must be especially careful to avoid discussion of patients in the cafeteria, in hallways outside of patient areas, as well as in the community with family and friends.

- In a patient-centered environment, certain activities and procedures are accepted as routine. Despite this, care shall be taken to assure that the patient's physical privacy will always be protected by appropriate screening and draping as a demonstration of the employee's appreciation of the patient as an individual.