

 <p style="text-align: center;">CREDIT VALLEY THE CREDIT VALLEY HOSPITAL</p>	CLINICAL PRACTICE GUIDELINE	PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE
TITLE: Psychiatric Special Care Unit (PSCU) Intervention Guideline		
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SUPERCEDES:	ISSUED BY: _____ TITLE: Chief of Medical Staff	
	ISSUED BY: _____ TITLE: President	

Purpose:

To provide a guideline for the use of the Psychiatric Special Care Unit (PSCU).

Definition:

The Psychiatric Special Care Unit is a contained area within the Inpatient Psychiatric Department and is reserved for patients requiring more intensive care and/or monitoring. The goal is to ensure the provision of medically necessary psychiatric treatment in an environment that is safe for patients and staff. It should be used when less restrictive interventions are inadequate or are not appropriate, and when the risks of these interventions are outweighed by the risks associated with all other alternatives.

Selection Criteria:

PSCU intervention should be considered in the following situations where the patient/family/staff are at risk:

- To prevent harm to the patient or other persons, including other patients, family members and staff, when other interventions are not effective or appropriate.
- To ensure a safe treatment environment when other interventions are not effective or appropriate
- To prevent the patient from leaving the unit; risk of elopement.
- To reduce environmental stimulation.

Patients may be under a certificate of Application for Psychiatric Assessment (Form 1), Certificate of Involuntary Status (Form 3 or Form 4), or Certificate of Incapacity (Form 33).

Consent will be obtained from those patients not under a certificate, prior to being transferred or admitted to the PSCU.

Patients who are at risk but are not on a certificate may be forcibly detained for their own safety or the safety of others. Under these circumstances an order for PSCU will be obtained from the Psychiatrist or the Psychiatrist On Call immediately following a transfer to PSCU.

Responsibilities:

Admitting or transferring a patient to the PSCU requires an order from the Psychiatrist or the Psychiatrist On Call.

The assessment and indication(s) for use of the Psychiatric Special Care Unit will be documented daily on the **Psychiatric Special Care Unit Flowsheet** by Nursing.

Criteria for transfer out of PSCU will be documented on the flowsheet and explained to the patient.

Treatment and Monitoring:

1. The ordering of PSCU is a medical intervention that requires an order from the Psychiatrist.
2. The Psychiatrist or the Psychiatrist On Call will assess the patient within 24 hours of ordering PSCU.
3. The Psychiatrist or the Psychiatrist On Call will assess the effectiveness of the treatment plan.
4. The Psychiatrist or the Psychiatrist On Call will document their assessment and the mental health status of the patient.
5. Patients in the PSCU will be under either constant or close observation to ensure their safety.
6. An order from the Psychiatrist is required to transfer a patient out of PSCU.
7. The use of PSCU may be traumatic for some patients. The treatment team should consider post-intervention counseling whenever clinically indicated.
8. Patient/Staff debriefing may occur following each admission in the PSCU.
Debriefing will include:
 - A) Factors leading to the use of PSCU
 - B) Steps to reduce the potential future need for the use of the PSCU
 - C) The clinical impact of the intervention on the patient
 - D) A review of the treatment plan with the patient
9. When an episode in PSCU exceeds 7 days, a second opinion through a consultation from another member of the Department of Psychiatry, will be requested.

Evaluation:

A pre and post PSCU intervention guideline review will be done to evaluate the use of the PSCU.

References:

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Approval:

Department of Psychiatry: February 2002

Mental Health Steering Committee: February 2002

Professional Practice Committee: May 2002

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