

**CORPORATE POLICY & PROCEDURE
CODE PURPLE:
Hostage Situation
ROHCG
CORP IX-ii – 100**

CODE PURPLE: Hostage Situation	
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1. PURPOSE:

To provide direction to staff of the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group (ROHCG) in dealing with the initial stages of hostage taking, promote safety and provide an exchange of information in the event of a *Code Purple – Hostage Situation*.

2. POLICY STATEMENT:

The ROHCG is committed to providing a safe environment for all patients, staff and visitors. A *Code Purple* will be initiated for any hostage-taking situation or identification of a person with a weapon.

3. SCOPE:

This policy applies to the ROHCG. Carlingwood, ROP and BMHC will follow site specific plans.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

If you are taken hostage:

- Remain as calm and cooperative as possible
- Avoid aggressive language, strong opinions or demeanor
- Do not accept any refreshments offered by the hostage taker
- Do not attempt to escape without considering success and implications

If you observe the hostage taking:

- Do not attempt to resolve the situation
- Stay away from the vicinity of the hostage incident
- Do not place yourself or hostages in position of unnecessary risk

External Communication during a Code Purple Situation: At no time should any staff member communicate with members of the community, media, etc. about the Code Purple Situation. This includes use of social media.

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5. DEFINITIONS:

Code Purple: the emergency “code designed to elicit a response to a hostage taking” (OHA, 2008).

Emergency Code Coordinator: This role provides command and coordination to the respective unit where assigned. During a code situation, this person will provide guidance and direction to all staff, patients, volunteers and others present on the unit.

Emergency Command Manager: This role is responsible for providing overall leadership and management of emergency activities through response, recovery, resumption and post emergency phases.

Hostage: A person who is being threatened or held against their will.

Hostage Taking: The act of a person holding another party in a conflict. Usually hostage taking develops in three stages: confrontation, communication and negotiation. Staff will be involved in stages one and two; the Police are usually involved in stage three with consultation of staff.

6. PROCEDURE:

6.1 Code Initiation - Any staff member who recognizes the development of a hostage situation and/or sees an individual with a weapon should:

- Move quickly away from the area and bring others with you if safe to do so
- Seek cover and warn others in the immediate area of the situation.
- Dial Switchboard at 333 to report the situation and activate Code Purple and report the following:
 - Location of Incident
 - Description of hostage taker
 - Identify if the hostage taker is armed and the type of weapon

6.2 Roles and Responsibilities:

6.2.1 Switchboard, upon receiving the call from the location of a Code Purple incident, will:

- Announce Code Purple immediately on the public address system, including the location. Repeat the announcement three (3) times in a slow, clear voice - first two announcements in English and third announcement in French.
- Call 911 and transfer the call to the Emergency code Coordinator in order to report the incident to Police Services
- Follow direction provided by police services
- Contact:
 - Security
 - Director/Delegate (After Hours Manager) responsible for area
 - Communications
- Announce “all clear” when instructed to do so.

6.2.2 Security (and other Ellis Don Staff as identified) will:

- Follow direction of the Security Manager (or delegate) in carrying out the Ellis Don Services (ROMHC) Restricted Access Policy.
- Gather information to provide to Police Services upon their arrival

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- Assist as directed by Police Services to provide support to manage the flow of people and vehicles into and out of the scene

6.2.3 Staff in area of Code Purple

Emergency Code Coordinator will:

- If safe to do so, lead the evacuation of the immediate area surrounding the hostage taking.
- Communicate with Police services
- If evacuation is not possible, direct all staff to move into an area of safety, lock or barricade door(s) and remain out of sight and in place until “All Clear” is announced.
- Ensure an inventory of the area is maintained, including patients, visitors and staff.
- Follow direction of Emergency Command Manager (or designate) and/or Police Services

All Other Staff will:

- Follow direction of Emergency Code Coordinator
- Provide ongoing reassurance to patients and visitors
- If a Code Purple is called for your work area while you are away, do not return there.

6.2.5 Staff in all other areas

Emergency Code Coordinator will:

- Instruct staff to stop all movement throughout the building
- Close all perimeter doors and ensure they are locked
- Confidently and calmly assure staff, patients, and visitors to remain in their secured locations
- Prepare to evacuate the unit/area. Direction to evacuate will be given by the Emergency Command Manager. In this case refer to Code Green procedures.
- Remain calm and alert. Listen for further direction via the overhead page announcements or via direct communication from Security, Police Services or the Emergency Command Manager
- Restore normal patient care operations once directed over the Public Address System as “All Clear”.

Administrative Staff/Outpatient Staff/Inpatient Staff away from their unit will:

- In in a hall or open area, proceed to the nearest office, meeting room or other enclosed area
- Remain in place until notified of “All Clear”
- Follow directions heard in overhead announcements, or given by Emergency Command Manager.
- Refrain from using telephones (cell and landline), except for providing information regarding the emergency

6.2.6 The Director/Delegate of the area in Code Purple will:

- Identify self as the Emergency Command Manager
- Determine need to activate Emergency Hospital Command Centre
- Coordinate resources to support evacuation of patients and staff members to safe areas

6.2.7 Senior Management Team will:

- Meet in the Incident Command Centre

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- Follow direction of Emergency Command Manager regarding activation of the Hospital Command Centre
- Develop action plan for after the situation has ended and the “All Clear” is called.

6.3 Recovery:

6.3.1 Following the Code Purple, Senior Management Team will:

- Prepare for mental health support needs of hostages.
- Provide mental health support for on-duty staff, patients and visitors.
- Conduct immediate debriefing with Police.
- Debrief staff hostages, as directed by Police.
- Ensure appropriate archiving of incident documentation.
- Ensure Completion of after-action report and corrective action plan
 - Summary of actions taken
 - Summary of the incident
 - Actions that went well
 - Areas for improvement
 - Recommendations for future response actions
 - Recommendations for corrective actions

7. RELATED PRACTICES AND/OR LEGISLATIONS:

8. REFERENCES:

Humber River Regional Hospital. (2010). Code Purple Procedure.
St. Joseph’s Healthcare. (2015) Code Purple-Hostage Situation Policy
St. Thomas Elgin. (2014) Code Purple Procedure
Ontario Hospital Association. (2009). Emergency Preparedness Toolkit

9. APPENDICES: N/A