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## CODE PURPLE – Hostage Taking

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**Approved by:** Administration

**Effective Date:** June 1, 2017

EP-04

**Issued By:** Administration

**Review Date:** July5, 2022

**Department(s)** All

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### **POLICY**

A **CODE PURPLE** is to be called in the event any person is forcibly confined, seized or delayed against their will with the threat of a weapon or threat of violence. This would also include a situation where an individual is in possession of a weapon and was threatening violence to themselves.

In cases where there is a threat, attempt or active use of a weapon to cause harm, **CODE SILVER** should also be initiated.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

Any person recognizing a hostage taking can initiate a **CODE PURPLE**.

### **PROCEDURE**

If you are taken as a hostage:

- Mentally gather information on your hostage taker(s) and your surroundings.
- Cooperate with your hostage taker(s) and avoid aggressive behaviour.
- Only speak when spoken to – do not initiate conversation with hostage taker(s).
- Avoid offering any opinions/suggestions.
- Do not avoid eye contact but do not stare.
- Assess possible escape opportunities but attempt to do so only if success is certain.
- Avoid doors and windows.
- Try to make mental notes of the major points of the demands or actions and any other pertinent information applicable.
- Answer demands with “I will do my best”, never say “No”.

If you observe or have escaped a hostage situation:

- Move well away from the area where the hostage taker(s) is and alert anyone you see to avoid the area.
- Notify the Nurse Manager/Director/Manager who will assume the responsibilities of the Incident Manager.

### **Incident Manager:**

Contact the Police immediately by dialling 9-911 and provide them with the following information:



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- The number and a description of the hostage taker(s).
- Whether the hostage taker(s) is/are armed and with what.
- The number of hostages, their identity, description and condition.
- The specific location within the building where the hostage taking has occurred.
- Any threats or demands that the hostage taker(s) have made.
- Telephone locations within the area of the hostage taking and their extension numbers.
- If the hostage(s) and hostage taker(s) are moving within the building, provide any details on any vehicle they may have used and their direction of travel.
- Inform them at which entrance you will meet them on their arrival.

Dial 781 and wait for the beep, announce “**CODE PURPLE**” three times OR dial Switchboard at 333 and inform them of situation. Then meet police at the designated entrance and direct them to where the hostage situation is taking place

Delegate someone to notify Admin On Call if after hours.

Remain in charge of the Code until relieved by a member of Senior Administration.

#### **Senior Administration:**

The first Senior Admin on scene will assume the Incident Manager’s role and be responsible for the hospital’s response to the situation and for the liaison and interaction with outside emergency response organizations. Once briefed, the Senior Admin will:

- Ensure that the area of the hostage taking situation is isolated and that any activity, normally conducted in or through that area, is either suspended or diverted.
- Gather key personnel to discuss the situation and determine if the hospital will initiate either a facility lockdown or limit access to specific areas or services only.
- Determine, in conjunction with the police, whether to evacuate visitors, volunteers and non-essential staff from the building until such time as the situation is resolved.
- Determine, in conjunction with the police, what, if any, information should be provided to the public while the hostage situation is ongoing.
- Page “**CODE PURPLE All Clear**” three times over the Hospital PA system when the hostage taking situation is resolved.
- Identify and interview key personnel involved while the events are still fresh in their mind and complete an Emergency Response Report”.

#### **Staff:**



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Staff responding to a **CODE PURPLE** should:

- Remain calm.
- Avoid the area of the hostage taking.
- Clear adjacent hallways and if possible, isolate the area.
- Secure patients/residents and visitors in patient/resident rooms.
- Close all doors.
- Wait for police to arrive.
- Wait instructions from the Incident Manager.

There is also a potential for a **Code Green** or **Code Silver** to be called if the incident cannot be mitigated.

Listen for directions over the Hospital PA System.

During **CODE PURPLE**, only paging related to the **CODE PURPLE** will be made.

**REFER TO CODE GREEN AND CODE SILVER FOR  
FURTHER DIRECTION IF REQUIRED.**