

Hospital policies – When healthcare providers have different opinions Knowledge Check

1. You are the obstetrician on call when you overhear two midwives talking in the hallway. The laboring patient they are caring for is refusing external fetal monitoring, despite concerns from one of the midwives that they heard a deceleration after the last contraction using intermittent auscultation.

What should be your next course of action?

- a. You should escalate your concerns about the midwives not following the hospital policy about fetal health surveillance to hospital leadership.
- b. You should not interfere as you are not the MRP for this patient and you do not have the right to be involved with their care without a consultation request from the midwives.
- c. Do nothing. You cannot do anything further since the patient has provided informed refusal.
- d. You should approach the midwives in the hallway and offer to assist them in speaking with the patient if they wish.

The correct answer is D. Offering your support to the midwives in a collegial way can help create a team atmosphere, demonstrate your support for the midwives, and provide the patient with alternatives.

2. In the scenario above, which question should you ask yourself, as it pertains to informed refusal?

Choose the **BEST** response.

- a. Is the patient aware of the consequences of not having adequate fetal health surveillance performed?
- b. Is the patient aware that the risks of external monitoring are less than those associated with internal scalp clip application?
- c. Is the patient aware of the hospital policy about fetal health surveillance?
- d. Is the patient's decision to refuse monitoring reasonable?

The correct answer is A. Consequences of refusing care is an important part of the informed refusal discussion.

3. In the scenario above, you speak to the midwives in the hallway but they do not want to consult you as the patient has made their wishes clear.

Which of the following is the **BEST** next step?

- a. Speaking directly with the patient as they may not understand the severity of the situation.
- b. Call the department head to resolve the situation.
- c. Document your discussion in the patient's chart.
- d. Respectfully reiterate the purpose of the hospital policy and that the patient has no choice.

The correct answer is C. Documenting your discussion is a reasonable next step to ensure your offer of help is recorded. You may be constrained by factors such as whether you know the patient's name and whether you have access to the patient's medical record. Your hospital or institution may have policies or protocols for documentation in these circumstances.

4. True or False:

The purpose of hospital policies is to accommodate practice variation and regulatory compliance.

The correct answer is FALSE. The purpose of hospital policies is to REDUCE practice variation and promote regulatory compliance. By reducing practice variation and standardizing practice, we can promote the delivery of safe, high quality patient care.