POLICY AND PROCEDURE

POLICY #  # 12.06
SUBJECT:  NATURAL NAIL POLICY FOR DIRECT AND INDIRECT PATIENT CARE STAFF

POLICY:

It is a policy of The Valley Hospital to promote natural fingernails and hand hygiene.

PURPOSE:

To define expectations and restrictions of artificial and natural nails and to reduce the transmission of pathogenic microorganisms to patients, employees, other staff and visitors throughout the organization.

DEFINITION:

Artificial nails are any substances or devices applied to natural nails except traditional nail polish and include, but is not limited to: artificial tips, wraps, inlays, appliqués, acrylics, gels, powders or light contrast nails and shellac manicures.

PROCEDURE:

I. Natural Nails

- All staff are encouraged to keep their nails natural, short, clean and healthy.
- Nail polish, where permitted must be in good repair, not chipped, cracked, worn away or peeling.
- Nail polish that is not in good repair must be removed.

II. Artificial Nails

- The use of artificial nails are prohibited for all individuals providing direct and indirect patient care, including:, all staff involved in sterilization and disinfection, all surgical staff, all staff involved in cleaning processes, all food handlers and all staff whose job task results in a product that will touch a patient.
III. Nail Polish

- Nail polish is prohibited on staff and physicians assigned to the following high risk areas: all staff in the Operating Room, all staff in the Obstetrics C-section Operating Rooms, all staff in the Cardiac Catheterization, Electrophysiology and Neurovascular Interventional Labs, all staff in Hemodialysis – Acute and Chronic, all staff in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, all staff in Endoscopy Decontamination Area, all staff in CPD, all food handlers in Valley Dining.

IV. Nail Length

- Nail length shall not exceed 5 mm or ¼ inch.

V. Violation

- Staff found to be in violation of this policy will be asked to remove their artificial nails/nail polish and/or be suspended without pay until their fingernails are in compliance with this policy.
- Violation of this Policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

RESPONSIBILITY: Vice President, Patient Care Services/CNO

Audrey Meyers
President and Chief Executive Officer

EFFECTIVE: 04/09/10
REVISED: 07/13/12
SUPERSEDES: Policy #12.06, Natural Nail, 04/09/10

Nurse Practice Education Committee, April 13, 2012


Regulatory: New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services Consumer and Environmental Services. Sanitation in Retail Food Establishments and Food and Beverage Vending Machines (Chapter 24). Effective date: January 2, 2007.

Forsyth NURSE Scale© Level 1