Transition of Care Policy

Title: Transition of Care Policy

Purpose: To establish a protocol and standards within the department of Ophthalmology at UPMC to ensure the quality and safety of patient care when transfer of responsibility between normal weekday hours (8.30am -5pm) and out-of-hours on call shift changes and other scheduled or unexpected circumstances.

Responsible Parties: Faculty, fellows and residents of the UPMC Department of Ophthalmology

Effective: March 1, 2018

Policy

Structured hand-over processes to facilitate both continuity of care and patient safety will be monitored by the division chiefs. The residency program will ensure that residents are competent in communicating with team members in the hand-over process.

Call assignments are designed to minimize the number of transitions in patient care. One resident and one faculty member will be assigned to the inpatient consult service at each site on each shift. At CHP the attending in clinic at CHP Main will be the designated attending for in patient consult. Residents will participate in a structured sign out process at the beginning and end of each shift. The on-call attending (or on-site clinic attending at CHP Main) must participate in this process at least once each day.

UPMC ensures the availability of schedules that inform all members of the health care team of attending physicians and residents currently responsible for each patient’s care. All call schedules are available on the UPMC MedTrak website and from the hospital operator.

Procedures

An on-call resident and an on-call faculty member will be assigned to cover the inpatient consult service at each site for each daytime, night and weekend shift. The on-call resident will have responsibility for initial evaluation of each patient and will be required to communicate with the on-call faculty member promptly in case of diagnostic uncertainty, vision threatening urgency and any case requiring admission or urgent surgery. At CHP during weekday working hours the clinic on-site attending or fellow must be verbally contacted.

The on-call resident will email the resident and faculty (including fellows) taking over at the end of night shift by 8:30 am. The on-call faculty member taking over will be responsible for reading and acknowledging the email, confirming assigned tasks for the day and scheduling a time to round with the resident taking over.

The resident on-call and the resident taking over will participate in a structured sign-out during evening transition of call via email or verbally.

Sign out emails and conversations will succinctly and accurately describe 1. newly admitted patients, 2. new consults, 3. previously seen patients requiring follow up, and 4. patients seen in the emergency department that will require outpatient follow up. There will be a task list for each patient.

At CHP the sign-out email should be copied to all pediatric ophthalmology faculty members and fellows. Include other services only as needed, and only with concurrent verbal communication with the fellow or attending on that service.

On the Oakland campus the sign-out email should be copied to the previously on-call resident and attending, and the attending and resident taking over and the consult service director.