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Office Closures Due to Hazardous Weather

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide consistent protocols for offices to follow in the event of hazardous weather.

1. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Pediatric Healthcare Associates (XXXX) employees, management, temporary workers, student interns, and volunteers.

Definitions:

*Delay/Early Closure:* All offices, including the business office and phone center are expected to report to work at an identified time, or will be closing at the same time.

*Shut-down Closure:* All offices, including the business office and phone center will be closed for the entire day.

*Partial Closure:* Select offices and the phone center will be open for all, or certain hours. The business office will be opened or closed as appropriate.

1. POLICY

It is the expectation that offices will remain open and follow posted schedules at all times. However, since both patient and employee health and safety are primary concerns, there may be circumstances when it is prudent to close or delay the Practice or an individual office due to hazardous weather.

In all hazardous weather circumstances, the Executive Committee, Scheduling Manager and HR Manager will, together, make decisions regarding closures or delays. Same day, morning closures or delays will be determined by the Executive Committee, Scheduling Manager and HR Manager by 6:30am. The COO (Schedule Manager as backup) will have a call with the managers, to relay plans no later, then 6:45am.

Practice Wide Shut down or delay:

All offices of the Practice are considered essential in the event of delays or total shutdown. At the direction of the Executive Committee of a practice wide closure, item #6 of this policy will be executed by the Scheduling Manager (HR Manager is backup).

Partial Closure

Any of the five offices could be considered essential to XXXX in the event of a partial Practice closure depending on the weather. At the direction of the Executive Committee of a partial closure, item #7 of this policy will be executed by the Scheduling Manager (HR Manager is backup).

Only sick visits appointments may be scheduled into offices open as a result of a partial closure.

Staffing for each open office will be: 1 Clinician; 1 Nurse and 1 Receptionist

General support staff will be: 1 Triage Nurse; 3 Phone Center Receptionists, 1 Task Nurse (or MA in each office)

1. EXCEPTIONS

Individual offices are not authorized to make decisions regarding hazardous weather closures except in the event they are directed to do so by a local authority who is acting on an emergency event (e.g. impending tornado). Such closers must be reported to the C.O.O. as soon as practical.

Clinicians know best about the needs of their patients and can be relied upon to make decisions in the best interest of their patients’ health, including weighing the costs and benefits to patients traveling during hazardous weather. However, no clinician or office should modify or cancel an office schedule because of hazardous weather or a forecast of hazardous weather.

1. COMPLIANCE

As a condition of employment, and continued employment, all personnel of XXXX are required to comply with this policy.

All employees of the Practice are considered essential and should have their own plan in place in the event of hazardous weather.

If the Executive Committee makes the determination to close due to hazardous weather, individual offices do not have the option to stay open.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

1. Notifications – Practice Wide Closure or delay

The Scheduling Manager (HR Manager is backup), will

* Determine which clinicians will be taking call for the day as appropriate
* Notify the Answering Service
* Ensure all managers are aware of the 6:45am conference call.

IT manager (Phone Center Manager is backup)

* Initiate the Practice’s automated notification system to all patients & employed personnel

Phone Center manager (Operations Manager is backup):

* Personally, notify any prenatal/newborn visits scheduled

Marketing manager (COO is backup):

* Post a message on social media & blast email

1. Notification – Partial Closure

The Scheduling Manager (HR Manager is backup), will

* Determine which clinicians will be reporting (or taking call if needed) and contact clinician(s) (see item 9a under Pre-planning for Managers)
* Create a special template for the clinicians working & inform managers
* Close templates of clinicians not working so that nothing more gets scheduled to them
* Notify the Answering Service
* Ensure all managers are aware of the 6:45am conference call.

The COO (HR Manager as backup):

* Notify managers of closures and who is to report at which locations (see item 9a under Pre-planning for Managers)

Assigned Managers will contact anyone that had a sick visit to see if they want to reschedule

their appointment for that day at an open location/time.

The Phone Center Manger will:

* Instruct phone center staff of appropriate reporting location (XXXXX phone center or one of the open offices)

IT manager will:

* Create a file of patient schedule (patient name, time of visit, location of visit, contact information, visit provider) and put into the Share drive Schedules folder for managers to access.
* Initiate the Practice’s automated notification system to all patients (ONLY) to cancel appointments.

Marketing manager will (COO is backup):

* Post a message on social media & blast email

1. Rescheduling Appointments

Appointments cancelled due to hazardous weather must be rescheduled within acceptable time frames based on the medical needs of the patient. The objective should be to reschedule all appointments cancelled due to hazardous weather for a date within two weeks of the originally scheduled appointment whenever possible.

The Practice may need to utilize additional resources to meet these timelines that may include, but are not limited to: Adding additional sessions and/or overtime for staff

1. Pre-Planning Considerations for Managers
2. Have an updated list, by office, of clinicians, phone center staff, nurses (including 1 triage nurse) and receptionist willing and able to work on hazardous weather days. Ensure the individuals on the list are aware that they should abide by the notification from our automated system unless otherwise contacted by you.
3. Develop a staffing plan that considers coverage:
   1. In the event of call-outs or staff who may be delayed in getting in.
   2. In the event we have to extend hours the day following the weather incident
   3. In the event we have to add more sessions
4. Avoid scheduling of routine care, well visit, prenatal or new baby visits on the days with predicted weather events.
5. Ensure that colleagues have a number where you can be reached