

DESERT WILLOW TREATMENT CENTER



AMA (Against Medical Advice) & Administrative Youth Discharge

POLICY 9.11
EFFECTIVE DATE 10/20/2023
PAGES 2
REVISION DATE(S) 10/23; 06/18; 01/08; 01/02; 01/99

APPROVED BY: Dr. Gwendolyn Greene (signature on file)
CLINICAL PROGRAM MANAGER II

I. POLICY

All discharges from Desert Willow Treatment Center should be planned and in accordance with the identified treatment goals for the youth.

Parents/legal custodians, however, may request the discharge of a youth at any time.

II. PURPOSE

To define procedures for unplanned discharges and discharges Against Medical Advice (AMA).

III. PROCEDURE

- A. In the event of an unplanned discharge due to a medical emergency refer to Policy 7.32 Emergency Medical Care/ER Transfer Packet.
 - a. If the youth is not admitted to the medical hospital, the youth is not to be discharged from DWTC.
 - b. If the youth is admitted to the medical hospital, then the youth must be administratively discharged from DWTC prior to midnight on the day that the youth was admitted to the medical hospital.
 - i. A "Routine" Aftercare Plan will be completed.
 - 1. In the event of an after-hours discharge and the therapist is not available, the Aftercare Plan may have incomplete therapeutic information.
 - ii. The Utilization Review Nurse will submit necessary documentation to end any insurance authorizations to treat as per the requirements of the youth's insurance provider.
- B. In the event a parent/legal custodian requests that a youth be discharged outside of a planned discharge the unit nurse will immediately inform the attending psychiatrist, therapist and nursing supervisor.
 - a. The nursing supervisor will inform the Clinical Program Manager II, Director of Nursing, and Medical Director for their instructions.
- C. The attending psychiatrist has the authority to authorize or refuse the youth discharge.
- D. The attending psychiatrist has the following options:
 - 1. Discharge the youth as an Administrative Discharge to the parent/legal custodian if in the judgment of the Psychiatrist, the discharge is therapeutic.
 - a. The unit nurse will inform the nursing supervisor.

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- b. The nursing supervisor will contact the Clinical Program Manager II, Director of Nursing, and Medical Director for their instructions.
 - c. It is at the discretion of the attending psychiatrist whether discharge medications will be ordered.
 - d. A “Routine” Aftercare Plan will be provided.
 - i. In the event of an after-hours discharge and the therapist is not available, the Aftercare Plan may have incomplete therapeutic information.
2. Discharge the youth Against Medical Advice (AMA)
- a. Prior to a youth’s discharge when an AMA recommendation is made, the unit nurse will inform the nursing supervisor.
 - b. The nursing supervisor will contact the Clinical Program Manager II, Director of Nursing, and Medical Director for their instructions.
 - c. The parent / legal guardian will be informed that Child Protective Services (CPS) will be contacted prior to the youth discharge.
 - d. CPS to be contacted and informed of the AMA discharge.
 - i. CPS will determine whether youth may be discharged.
 - e. If CPS Determines that youth may be discharged AMA then the following must occur:
 - i. An AMA Discharge - Release from Facility Without Consent form (Attachment A) will be completed with the parent/legal custodian.
 - ii. An “AMA” Aftercare Plan will be provided which indicates that the parent / legal guardian is responsible for all follow-up.
 - iii. It is at the discretion of the attending psychiatrist whether discharge medications will be ordered.
 - iv. An Incident/Accident Report (Attachment B) is to be completed with the Suspected Child Abuse Report (Attachment C) attached.
 - f. If CPS Determines that youth may not be discharged AMA, then the following must occur:
 - i. The youth will remain in the hospital.
 - ii. Parent / legal guardian will be informed of the determination by CPS.
 - iii. the Clinical Program Manager II, Director of Nursing, and the Medical Director are to be contacted for their instructions.
3. Refuse to discharge the youth to a parent/legal custodian if there is sufficient doubt as to the youth’s safety, risk factors, emotional status as well as, the competency of the parent/legal custodian.
- a. In this event, the Psychiatrist may hold the youth in the hospital and inform Child Protective Services.
 - b. If the psychiatrist decides it is appropriate to detain the youth, the unit nurse will inform the nursing supervisor.
 - c. The nursing supervisor will contact the Clinical Program Manager II, Director of Nursing, and Medical Director for their instructions.

REFERENCES:

The Joint Commission Standards
Care, Treatment, and Services (CTS)

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. AMA Discharge - Release from Facility Without Consent DWTC #74
- B. Incident Accident Report DWTC 72
- C. Suspected Child Abuse Report DWTC 78

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