PURPOSE: Authorities recognize that providers are subject to various types of impairment. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that provider impairment does not compromise patient care.

SCOPE: This policy applies to all members of the medical staff, residents, medical students, locum tenens and allied health professionals, while working at The Chambersburg Hospital campus.

RESPONSIBILITY: All individuals covered under the scope of this policy must follow the guidelines of this policy. Refusal of the provider to allow the PIC (or designee) to examine him or her under the guidelines of this policy is grounds for summary suspension under Article V, Section 2.1, of the Medical Staff Bylaws.

PROCEDURE:

A. It is the responsibility of every health care provider to report to the hospital fit for duty. If a provider feels unable to provide quality care for any reason, he or she is responsible for arranging for continuous coverage of his or her patients, by another staff provider. Impairment may be due to medical or psychiatric illness, stress, family problems, sleep deprivation, substance or alcohol use or abuse.

B. If the problem is persistent or of a serious nature, the provider must seek help. The Physician Health and Performance Committee will be available for guidance for the provider, if desired, with the guarantee of anonymity. When on call, providers need to be responsible for the effects of any substance that he or she takes, including alcohol, antihistamines, or potentially mood-altering substances.

C. Anyone on the hospital staff (including other providers or nurses) who believes that a provider on duty is intoxicated, or is impaired in thinking, or behavior, should notify the PHYSICIAN IN CHARGE (PIC). [The PIC is the Chair/Vice Chair of the Department in which the provider is a member. If the Chair/Vice Chair is not available, the PIC will be the Medical Staff President, Vice Medical Staff President or Secretary/Treasurer of the Medical Staff (in that order).] The staff can reach these individuals through the hospital operator.

D. The PIC will speak with the person making the complaint, and with the provider in question.
1. If the PIC has a reason to believe that the provider is impaired, the PIC will:
   a. Refer the provider immediately to the Patient Services Office for a fitness-for-duty evaluation (which will, at least, include a physical examination and blood and urine tests for drugs of abuse to include immediate presumptive testing, and if positive, two (2) independent confirmatory tests). The PIC will document on the Fit-for-Duty Form any medications currently or recently taken by the provider. (Above language will be included in the Lab’s policy.) Laboratory staff will send all positive drug screens for confirmation. Laboratory staff will attach all laboratory reports to the Fit-for-Duty Form.

2. The PIC will consider a positive drug screen and/or a blood alcohol level of 0.04 or greater impairment until the Certified Medical Review Officer completes the results of the confirmation tests and reviews said results. The PIC will call the impaired provider’s backup, who will assume care of the allegedly impaired provider’s patients. The PIC will document the results of the drug and alcohol testing on the Fit-for-Duty Form.

3. Refer the allegedly impaired provider to the Physician Health and Performance Committee if the provider is (1) acutely impaired, which is either the result of drug or alcohol involvement or due to a medical condition (not drug or alcohol related), or (2) if the provider is not acutely impaired but the PIC has concern related to a chronic or progressive condition which may cause impairment.

4. If the PIC determines that the provider is not impaired, the PIC will document the nature of the complaint, and the outcome. The PIC will sign and date this statement. The Physicians Health and Performance Committee will review all cases when the staff invokes the Fitness for Duty process and uses the Fitness-for-Duty Form.

5. All parties will protect the anonymity of the person calling the PIC at their request.

6. The Medical Staff organization will pay for the cost of the fitness-for-duty examination.

7. The PIC will document all actions taken under this policy in writing and Medical Staff Services will maintain the records in locked or secured files. Physician Health and Performance Committee should review any requests from outside sources regarding a provider’s fitness-for-duty status. Physician Health and Performance Committee will provide any necessary response to the outside source.

8. Medical Staff Services will bring any incident that occurs to the attention of the Hospital President, in a confidential manner.