

DEEP RIVER AND DISTRICT HEALTH

Policy: Code White – Violent Situation	
Original Date:	Policy Manual: Emergency Preparedness
Approved by: <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Directors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chief Executive Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Chief Financial Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Chief Nursing Executive	

Policy

Deep River and District Health which includes: Deep River & District Hospital, North Renfrew Family Health Team, and The Four Seasons Lodge, provides exceptional care for patients and has a responsibility to ensure that all staff, patients, residents, volunteers, and visitors have a safe environment.

A Code White is an emergency procedure that provides an immediate response to assist with a situation when there is violence or a threat of violence to themselves or others where the available resources are not sufficient to manage the situation safely.

Purpose

- To respond to a summons for help as a preventative or actual measure to ensure the safety of any person in a potentially violent situation.
- To provide safe management of agitated individuals before or if they become violent.
- To support the Standards of Behaviour with respect to threatening, abusive behaviour. NRHC is committed to protecting the safety of patients, visitors and staff.

Initiation

A Code White is initiated by any staff member who:

- feels there is the potential for a situation to escalate into violence
- is being threatened or witnesses threats
- perceives themselves or others to be in danger of physical harm from an aggressive person
- determines a person is acting out in a manner that is dangerous to self, others, or the environment
- determines that the situation is rapidly escalating out of control

How to Activate a Code White

If you witness violence or perceive a violent incident may escalate beyond that which you can control, complete any or multiple of the following:

- Activate your personal alarm or panic button
- Page “Code White and Location x3” by pressing 7999 - 2
- Notify departmental supervisor
- Call 911 if the situation not managed with the Code White

Code White Responders

The team is comprised of a wide range of disciplines within the health care setting.

The responders use verbal and physical tools to de-escalate the acting out person. All responders will be aware of and adhere to DRDH policies for least restraint.

During the hours of 0800 and 1600 regular business days, the following staff will respond to Code White

- Charge Nurse (**Code White Team Leader**)
- Administrator on call
- Housekeeping Staff Member assigned to ER
- One RPN from Family Health Team
- Nurse assigned to care for patient/resident (if applicable)

After business hours there are limited staff available to respond to Code White.

- The First Responder will page Code White and call 911/press panic button or can delegate this task
- Any staff member available will respond to the Code White location, ensuring patient or resident safety is not in jeopardy while responding to Code White.

Code White Responder Responsibilities

All Code White Responders take direction only from the Team Leader and are dismissed by the Team Leader.

When involved in or encountering a violent situation:

- Assess the safety of self and others in the area. Based upon an assessment that a person(s) poses an immediate risk of harm to self, others or the environment, initiate a "Code White."
 - Remain calm and do not escalate the situation by being confrontational.
 - Remove others in the area away from the situation.
 - Tell the aggressor that his/her behaviour is unacceptable and must stop. Be specific about the exact behaviour to be stopped.
 - give the person your undivided attention;
 - be non-judgmental;
 - focus on the person's feelings, not just the facts;
 - allow silence; and use restatement to clarify messages.
 - While attempting to verbally de-escalate, consider methods such as subtly creating physical barriers between you and the violent person, subtly pick up a binder or other defense object, keep your hands out of your pockets, and be mindful of exits.

If the situation becomes physical or if a weapon (including any edged weapon) is threatened, produced, or used, immediately call for help, leave the area if possible, and initiate a Code Silver.

Responders react in a coordinated manner under the direction of the Team Leader and carry out any tasks assigned by the Team Leader such as:

- Crowd control
- Clearing area of hazardous objects
- Supporting other team members
- Preparing restraints
- Control and restrain as needed
- Assist in escorting restrained client
- Implement the interventions in collaboration with the Code White Team Leader and as per the goals of the intervention and guiding principles of crisis intervention.
- This may include provision of physical hands-on techniques such as crisis intervention team transport or team control interventions.
- Complete relevant documentation following the intervention
- Participate in debriefing, suggest recommendation for improvement of response

Code White Team Leader

The Charge Nurse will take on the role of the Team Leader.

The Code White Team Leader will:

- Determine the need to call for backup and if needed will call or delegate someone to call

admin on call after hours.

- If there is a sufficient number of responders to manage the incident and assign responders to the following:
 - Control and direct traffic
 - Ensure patients, residents, visitors and volunteers are cleared from the immediate area
 - Clear the area of potential dangerous objects
 - Delegate RN or RPN to prepare medication if required
 - Remain with the person and response team until the code is resolved
 - Declare "All Clear" once situation has resolved
- Develop a plan of action and ensure that all response team members understand their role.
- Assess the level of restraints and organize restraint application with response team members
- Contact or direct another staff member to contact the Police by calling 9-1-1 If the crisis escalates beyond ability to safely manage the situation,
- Participate in the staff debriefing process as assigned
- Ensure an Incident Report is filed for and follow-up investigation.

First Responder

- Is the first person on the scene (usually the nurse caring for the patient/resident)
- Determines that Code White should be called, page "Code White and Location x3" by dialing 7999 - 2
- Stays with the individual talking with him/her at a safe distance.
- Briefs Code White Team Leader upon arrival, providing details of the incident including:
 - Brief history of the incident
 - What action has been taken
 - What action is/may be required by code white team

All Staff Responsibilities

Once a Code White is called, those not part of the Code White Response Team and who do not have a client assignment/responsibility must leave the immediate area and must not interfere with the response, unless ordered to do so by the Code White Team Leader. Staff are to:

- Monitor the safety of the environment and address any safety issues, directs other persons to a safe area and removes dangerous objects.
- Assess impact of incident on other patients and the unit.
- Provide support to other patients, family members, or visitors and support as necessary while maintaining confidentiality.

Controls used during a Code White incident

DRDH is committed to the principle of "least restraint" for any incident where an individual has to be restrained. Controls which may be used in a Code White situation include:

- physical restraints (hands on)
- mechanical restraints (ex. 4 point and 5 point restraints).

The response team will give assistance within the affected facility area when an individual patient or resident is hostile or is engaged in harmful behaviours to themselves, the environment or others, i.e. throwing objects, uncontrollable anger/yelling, kicking, flailing arms etc. Verbal and non-physical de-escalation methods will be attempted before attempting to physically restrain someone.

When to call Deep River Police Department (DRPD)

- If any weapons and/or a hostage are involved
 - Call 911 immediately
- Threatening, verbal threats, i.e., death threats, threats of violence should be taken seriously and reported to the DRPD and must be charted.
- When the aggressive behaviour occurs outside the limits of pursuit, established by the

organization (i.e., off hospital property).

- When the first responder determines that the situation is beyond his/her abilities.

The DRPD may be called at any time during a Code White, If the police are called, the “Administrator-on-call” must be notified

- When police arrive on the scene, they assume control of the situation, i.e., directing staff and others as necessary. Response Team will work collaboratively with the police.

Quality Assurance

- The staff member who called the Code White will complete an Incident Report
- Debrief will occur once situation resolved and all staff, patient/resident and visitor safety assured
- All Code White Debriefs will be reviewed by the Emergency Preparedness Committee and the Joint Health and Safety Committee.
- Mock Code White drills will be completed and de-briefed on annually as required.

Review Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Executive Lead Team – April 3, 2018• Emergency Preparedness Committee – July 18, 2023• Joint Health and Safety Committee – July 13, 2023
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