

Access to Care Policy

**Policy Title: Access to Care
WAC 246-320-141**



**Issued: 4.3.14
Approved: 4.3.14
Revised:
Last Reviewed:**

Coulee Medical Center (CMC) is an integrated health system that includes two family practice clinics, one orthopedic clinic, and one hospital: Coulee Family Medicine, Coulee City Clinic, Columbia Orthopedics, and Coulee Medical Center. Through various delivery methods our clinics and hospital provides guidance to our healthcare professionals concerning admissions, nondiscrimination, end of life care and reproductive healthcare. The purpose of this policy is to provide our patients with a clear summary of the commitments and expectations in these subject areas.

Admission

CMC admits patients to the hospital as in-patients when the patient's diagnosis warrants admission, based on medical necessity and upon the orders of a provider.

- When CMC does not have an appropriate in-patient bed available; we will work with area hospitals as needed, to transfer the patient to an in-patient facility with capacity.
- When CMC lacks the expertise required to treat the medical condition, we will work with area hospital as needed, to transfer the patient to an appropriate facility.

Non-Discrimination

CMC is committed to ensuring that patients are treated with equality, in a welcoming, nondiscriminatory manner, consistent with state and federal law.

- CMC provides an environment for patients that are free from discrimination based on age, race, color, creed, ethnicity, religion, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, veteran or military status or any other basis prohibited by federal, state, or local law.
- Patients have a right to choose the family members and/or other individuals close to them who may participate in their healthcare decisions and have access to protected health information about them. We will respect patient choice.
- We will not condition a patient's access to emergency treatment and labor and delivery care on an ability to pay for such treatment.
- We will not discriminate in the provision of charity care to needy patients.

- If you believe there has been behavior inconsistent with these standards, you may file a complaint.

End of Life Care

CMC will honor patient choice in end of life decisions.

- We will talk with our patients and their family about advance directives that guide the healthcare team on your wishes for medical care. If a patient does not have an advance directive, we will provide them with information on how to do so.
- We will provide our patients with information on their rights to accept or refuse medical care and any limitation in our ability to implement their wishes.
- CMC provides the full range of comfort and palliative care for the end of life.
- CMC complies with the state law known as the Death with Dignity Act.

Reproductive Healthcare Services

As an integrated health system, the three clinics and the hospital work together to provide access to female and male reproductive healthcare services to meet a patient's clinical needs and a patient's choice, although not every procedure is available.

- Through the family practices clinics, patients have access to an array of preventative healthcare services including forms of contraception prevention, and the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases.
- CMC provides pre-natal care services with planned deliveries.
- In the emergency room of CMC we offer plan "B" while actively referring patients to providers.

Note: CMC permits their healthcare professionals to opt-out of participating in services that violate their conscience or values. In such circumstances, the hospital will arrange for other healthcare professionals to deliver the care for the patient.