ST. JOSEPH'S
GENERAL HOSPITAL
ELLIOT LAKE

St. Joseph's Manor

Code Purple

Hostage Situation

Overview

St. Joseph's General Hospital Elliot Lake (SJGHEL), St. Joseph's Manor (SJM), is committed to a safe environment for patients/resident/clients, staff, physicians, volunteers, and visitors.

Code Purple is the term used to announce required OPP assistance in order to immediately and safely handle a hostage-taking situation which poses a serious security/safety threat to employees, patients/residents, or visitors.

Code Purple may be called when:
- a person is being held or taken against their will. This may be in violent or non-violent manner.

Note 1: It is important to distinguish it from a Code White where staff could come to assist and potentially detain an aggressive person.

Initiating a Code Purple

Any staff member may identify a CODE Purple situation. Notification of the CODE Purple will occur in the following ways;
- If there is an immediate threat to life or safety of the hostage call the Switchboard who will call 911;
- Switchboard will provide the SJM entry code to the 911 Operator.

NOTE 1: Code Purple does not result in other staff coming to assist, as it is designed to keep people away from harm. Police will be contacted as soon as Code Purple is called.

If Calling Police:

- Use plain language – do not use SJM wording or language. Instead of saying there is Code Purple, say there is a hostage situation.
- Inform OPP if there is a weapon involved.

Once Police Arrive on Scene:

- Incident Manager to brief Officer on situation, including;
    - History of patient, if possible;
    - Expected drugs or medication involved;
    - Weapons, if any;
    - Assistance that SJM staff can provide;
- All staff to follow Officer's instructions and provide assistance as required.
- OPP to take command of incident

Ancillary Codes

Incident Manager will determine if either a Code Silver (Weapon) or a Code Green (Evacuation) should be initiated, requiring additional or different actions.

Responders

Command Centre is activated if it is safe to do so. The Code Purple Responders are comprised of the following which will report to Command Centre or an alternate safe location when the Command Centre is not available due to the proximity to the Code Purple Situation:

- Administrator Director of Care of area or delegate;
- Incident Manager who is 1st on scene;
- Director of SJM or delegate;
- CEO or delegate.

NOTE: Code Purple Responders will only report to Command Centre if it is safe to do so. If not, the responders will remain where they are. The Code Purple Responders will function with as many members as available.

Command Centre

The Command Team will meet in the Command Centre which will be determined by the Incident Manager.

While control of the situation will be undertaken by law enforcement upon their arrival, the Code Purple Team will remain activated until the situation is resolved and debriefings with affected staff have occurred.

What to do if you are taken hostage:

- Do what you are told.
- Speak only when spoken to.
- Do not show emotion.
- Try to act relaxed and try not to panic.
- Remain seated, as this is less threatening. An aggressive or threatening stance should be avoided. The hostage-taker may perceive this as a threat and become agitated.
- Do not make suggestions to the hostage-taker.
- Be patient.
- Weigh escape chances carefully. A foiled escape will likely anger the hostage-taker.
- Have faith in negotiations.
- Try to sit away from any doors or windows to reduce the possibility of injury in the event the police decide to take the hostage-taker by force.

What to do if you discover a hostage-taking incident:

- Ensure your safety first. Get to a safe area.
- Call Switchboard who will call 911 advise of the situation.
- Provide the Switchboard with as many of the following details as possible:
    - Location of the incident.

- o Any visible signs of a weapon.
- o Number and description of hostage-takers.
- o Number and description of hostages.
- o Whether hostage-takers and hostages are contained within a specific room or area or whether they are mobile.
- Notify others in the area to stay away from the hostage-taking area.
- Keep others from entering the area and wait for OPP.

Other Staff:

- Stop movement through the building.
- Turn off distractions (i.e., TVs, monitors, radios, cell phones, etc.)
- Staff on the affected unit shall ensure safe evacuation of person(s) in the immediate area surrounding the situation, if safe to do so, as directed by the OPP.
- Supervisors or delegates shall make verbal contact (via face to face, phone, or cell phone) with department and delegate staff member to ensure all staff are accounted for.
- Once the OPP have arrived, all involved staff must take direction OPP and allow them to take over the situation.

Incident Manager (Administrator Director of Care or Delegate)

- Remain calm.
- Notify the manager or delegate on call, who will notify the CEO.
- Activate the Command Centre and its location
- Meet with and assist police with all requests.
- Work with police to determine if Code Green should be initiated.
- When it is safe to do so, and if necessary, establish IMS team and undertake the role of Incident Manager.
- Assign roles within the IMS Team.
- Determine when the 'Code Purple All Clear' message will be given.
- After incident, inform senior leadership team with details of incident.

CODE PURPLE PROCESS – SJM

If You Discover Hostage Situation

Seek Safety and warn others
Inform the Switchboard to dial 911
Inform Manager

Tell Switchboard

Situation
Location
# of hostages
Description of Hostage Taker
Weapons, if any

Have you been taken hostage?

No

Yes

Other Staff in Area

Do not engage
Do not go to location
Evacuate if safe to do so
Stay in safe area until police give OK to leave
Clear hallways of all people
Lock doors

Incident Manager

Remain calm.
Notify the Senior Administration/administrator on call.
Activate the Command Centre and its location
Meet with and assist police with all requests.
Determine when 'All Clear' message will be given.

If Taken Hostage

Remain calm and be patient
Speak when only spoken to
Keep away from doors and windows
Let negotiations have a chance
Do not try to escape unless you are sure you can

DISCLAIMER

This is intended as a tool to provide a high-level overview. To ensure a coordinated and effective emergency response, refer to the SJGHEL Code Policy.