

October 1, 2010

### **POLICY PROHIBITING PATIENT ABUSE**

It is a strict policy of the VA that no patient is to be neglected, mistreated or abused in any manner. Physical abuse, verbal abuse and abuse through neglect will not be tolerated. Any case of suspected or reported abuse or mistreatment of a patient will be investigated to determine the facts. Appropriate corrective or disciplinary action will be taken, if warranted.

In order to take disciplinary action, it is not necessary that abuse or mistreatment be proven beyond a reasonable doubt, as is the case in a court of law. Since this medical center is entrusted with the full care of patients, charges of abuse, mistreatment, or negligence will be sustained if it is reasonably shown by the evidence.

The normal penalty for abuse of patients is removal. The employee may receive a lesser penalty only when the abuse involves such acts as teasing a patient, speaking harshly, rudely, or irritably, or laughing at, ridiculing, or scolding a patient. However, in certain cases these acts can be considered major abuse. The use of disrespectful, vulgar, or slang expressions that are offensive to a patient's religious, racial or ethnic background can also be considered abusive.

An employee who witnesses abuse or mistreatment of a patient, and does not promptly report it to his/her supervisor or Service Line Vice President is subject to disciplinary action up to and including removal.

My signature below attests that:

"I have read this policy on patient abuse and have also received a copy of the VA Code of Patient Concern. I understand and agree to adhere to the policy of the VA which strictly prohibits any abuse against our veteran patients."

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Please print

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_