



College of Veterinary Medicine Policies and Procedures

Subject: Client Accounts Policy

Section: AHC Client Accounts/Admissions

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To Be Reviewed Yearly by: AHC Director

Source:

Cross Reference:

CLIENT ACCOUNTS POLICY

It is the policy of the Animal Health Center to establish procedures to ensure the financial viability of the organization while maintaining a high level of client satisfaction. In addition, the establishment of sound business procedures will serve to provide an excellent training environment for students and house officers.


Guiding Principles:


1. It is the clinician's responsibility to ensure that the hospital's financial policy is followed on each case treated at the AHC.
2. A signed treatment authorization is required on every patient that is going to be hospitalized overnight or is going to receive an invasive hospital procedure/treatment.
3. As part of the authorization, the clinician or their designee will discuss with the client the plan for treatment, possible complications, any available alternative treatments and prognosis. Additionally, the clinician will provide the client with an estimate for services in the form of a range (i.e., \$500 - \$1,000).
4. **The AHC requires that 75% of the high end of the estimate be paid prior to treatment or hospitalization and that the outstanding balance is paid in full prior to discharge.** It is the clinician's responsibility to notify the client when the actual charges exceed the estimated deposit balance, to discuss the additional costs and the treatment options available. **Deposits MUST be maintained at 75% of the potential total client bill.** It is also the clinician's or their designee's responsibility to notify Client Accounts of the increase in the estimate if the client agrees to the clinician's recommendations. Client Accounts will assist in any manner to contact the owner and collect additional payments. When deposits are paid by check or cash, the client is required to complete a W9 form. This form is required by MSU when refunds are issued. The completed form is kept in a locked cabinet and shredded if not used.
5. No clinician, student or hospital staff member has the authority to make financial arrangements with the client without approval from the AHC Director or their designee.
6. **The AHC requires an additional deposit any time the estimate for patient care is increased.**
7. The AHC accepts cash, personal checks, certified checks and credit cards as methods of payment.
8. Clients will be notified at the time of discharge that they may be billed for additional fees for tests or items that have not been entered into the Electronic Medical Record at the time of discharge, and that the account statement they receive at discharge may not be their total account balance.

9. The AHC does not file insurance claims for clients. They must pay their bill and then file their own claims. The AHC will assist with insurance filing in appropriate and reasonable means.
10. The AHC has the right to refuse treatment for a client's animal if the client poses a financial risk to the organization.
11. The AHC has the right under the laws of the State of Mississippi to hold an animal and potentially take ownership should the client not be able to pay their bill.
12. A service fee of will be charged on all returned checks. Contact Client Accounts for the current service charge fees

Compliance Issues

1. Lack of compliance with fiscal policies and procedures will be brought to the attention of the service chief and the AHC Director.
2. Write-offs resulting from non-compliance with fiscal policies and procedures are discouraged and should not occur. Any potential write-off will be at the discretion of the AHC Director and/or AHC Board of Directors.
3. Lack of compliance with fiscal policies and procedures by staff, students or clinicians could result in disciplinary action.

Approved:  10-1-14
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Date

Approved:  10/2/14
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