Policy:

It is the policy of this practice to maintain a cooperative and trusting physician-patient relationship with its patients. When such a physician-patient relationship has not been formed or a physician-patient relationship is no longer proceeding in a mutually productive manner, it is the policy of this practice to terminate the physician-patient relationship within the bounds of applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations; the American Medical Association guidelines, and this policy so that the patient can develop the type of trusting relationship with another physician that is essential to successful continued care and treatment.

Procedure:

1. The physician identifies a patient with whom the physician-patient relationship has not been created or that has been affected negatively. The types of circumstances that can result in termination include, but are not limited to, the following:
   
   - Noncompliance with treatments recommended by the practice, physician, or other healthcare provider
   - Failure to pay, consistent with our payment policy
   - Consistent failure to keep appointments
   - Threatening or abusive behavior directed at office staff, physicians, other healthcare providers, or patients
   - The patient is deceptive or lies
   - The patient abuses medication
   - The patient decides to leave the practice
2. The physician notifies the officer manager who will draft a letter to the patient. This letter must include the following:

- Inform the patient of the discharge from the practice
- Include reasons for the termination
- Inform the patient that the practice will provide emergency care up to but no more than 30 days from the date of the letter
- Provide the patient with resources for choosing another competent physician to continue with his or her care
- Attach a valid medical records release form
- Explain to the patient that the practice values a mutually cooperative and trusting physician-patient relationship, which clearly does not exist
- Identify any medical condition that requires immediate or continued care

3. Address the letter to the patient and send it by certified mail–return receipt requested. Also, send a copy by regular mail.

4. Place a copy of the letter directly into the patient’s medical chart.

- Record in the patient’s medical record that the practice sent the patient a letter.
- When appropriate, send a copy of the letter to the health insurance carrier or to any other appropriate entities or individuals.

5. Place appropriate flagging of the patient discharge in the patient’s medical chart, as well as in the scheduling system.

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