



Connected Care
of Southeastern Mass

CODE OF ETHICS

Honesty, Integrity, Doing the Right Thing

Connected Care of Southeastern Massachusetts (“Connected Care”) aspires to be our Medicare patients’ trusted choice for quality health care services. One of the ways we build that trust is by conducting ourselves with integrity and the highest ethical standards.

Trust is earned through our actions, not simply our good intentions. This Code of Ethics has been developed to assist all of us in “doing the right thing” in our interactions with others. It specifies the standards to which we hold ourselves accountable.

All those associated with Connected Care are expected to read, understand and comply with this Code. It provides helpful guidance about how to accomplish our work in an ethical and legal manner. It also explains the obligation we each have to speak up about any actions, situations or conditions that may violate this Code or the law. Both the Code and the law provide protection for individuals who report suspected wrongdoing in good faith.

This Code of Ethics is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to all of Connected Care’s policies or responsibilities under the law. If you have any questions, please contact the Compliance Department at 781-624-2190 or via email to ACOCCompliance@ConnectedCareSEMA.org.

Connected Care and its ACO Participants’ reputation as ethical entities/individuals is one of our most valuable assets. We strive to exemplify honesty and integrity in all that we do, so we may advance our mission of providing high quality, coordinated care to Medicare patients.

Definitions

Beneficiaries: means an Individual who is enrolled In Medicare.

Connected Care of Southeastern Massachusetts (Connected Care): is a Next Generation Accountable Care Organization (“ACO”) established by South Shore Health System, in collaboration with Harbor Medical Associates and Sturdy Memorial Hospital and Sturdy Memorial Associates.

Next Generation ACO Participants (ACO Participant or Connected Care Participant): means an individual or entity that:

- Is a Medicare-enrolled provider as identified on the Participant List
- Bills for items and services it furnishes to Beneficiaries under a Medicare billing number assigned to a TIN in accordance with applicable Medicare regulations;
- Is not a Preferred Provider;
- Is not a Prohibited Participant; and
- Pursuant to a written agreement with the ACO, has agreed to participate in the ACO, to report quality data through the ACO, and to comply with care improvement objectives and model quality performance standards.

Next Generation ACO Professional (ACO Professional): means a Next Generation ACO Participant who is either:

- A physician or
- One of the following non-physician practitioners:
 1. Physician assistant
 2. Nurse practitioner
 3. Clinical nurse specialist
 4. Certified registered nurse anesthetist
 5. Certified nurse midwife
 6. Clinical psychologist
 7. Clinical social worker
 8. Registered dietitian or nutrition professional

CODE OF ETHICS

Leader: Refers to all Connected Care ACO Participants, and their leadership (managers, directors), executive leadership and Board of Directors.

Workforce Member: Refers to all employees, volunteers, students, trainees, vendors, contractors, consultants, clinicians, agents, employed by or performing services on behalf of and at the direction of Connected Care or any ACO Participant.

Compliance Program: A set of controls, policies and procedures implemented by Connected Care to meet the standards set forth by the Office of Inspector General (OIG), federal and state laws/regulations, and/or regulatory agencies.

Introduction

Connected Care has developed this Code to provide key information about ethics and compliance situations that could arise while performing your job and/or providing clinical services to Beneficiaries. We are committed to providing you with the resources you need to understand and comply with these rules.

Your commitment to ethics and compliance is critical to the success of our Accountable Care Organization.

It is everyone's responsibility to become familiar with these requirements. It is your responsibility to set an example of ethical conduct and to encourage your staff to follow Connected Care policies, procedures and rules.

Not every topic described in this Code will apply to you and situations may arise that are not covered here. You may also be subject to additional requirements such as Medical Staff Bylaws of your hospital and government rules and regulations. You should contact your leader or the Connected Care Compliance Department if you have any questions. If there is any difference between the information outlined here and other hospital or physician group policies or procedures, you should comply with this Code and notify Connected Care's Compliance Department and your leader of the discrepancy.

Any Connected Care Participant or Workforce Member of Connected Care who disregards or violates this Code, the Compliance Program or any other applicable policies or procedures is subject to corrective action. The corrective action imposed will be determined on a case by

CODE OF ETHICS

case basis and will depend on the nature, severity and frequency of the violation. In addition, Connected Care may have an obligation to bring violations to the attention of appropriate outside authorities.

Compliance Is Everyone's Job

If you become aware of a potential compliance issue, it is your responsibility to do one or more of the following:

- Notify your leader
- In writing: Send information to the Compliance Office via interoffice mail (mailbox #82), email (ACOCCompliance@ConnectedCareSEMA.org) or regular mail, c/o South Shore Health System, Mailbox #82.
- By phone: Call the Compliance Office at 781-624-2190.
- Use the Helpline: Call the Compliance Confidential Helpline at 781-624-2191 at any time. (24/7). Calls go to a confidential voice mailbox so there is no audit trail or opportunity for caller identification.

Our Mission

Connected Care's mission is to provide high quality, coordinated care to our Medicare patients. Safeguarding the privacy and dignity of our patients is critical to our mission.

Quality Care and Patient Safety

Connected Care is dedicated to assisting patients with financial, social and other needs whenever possible to ensure they receive the right care at the right time. Connected Care is monitored by several regulatory agencies, and strives to uphold our quality standards, improve our processes and work with other organizations dedicated to quality care and patient safety.

We are committed to providing the support and resources you need to provide patient care.

Every Connected Care Participant and Workforce Member must be committed to meeting patient

care needs first and foremost. This means providing necessary care in a safe and timely manner and avoiding unnecessary care. Patients and families should be treated with respect and dignity, with patient and family needs being considered every step of the way.

Confidentiality, Privacy and Safeguarding Protected Data

All Connected Care Participants and Workforce members understand that medical information is personal (to that individual) and we are committed to safeguarding all “protected health information” (PHI) and to complying with the privacy regulations established as part of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Any information that can identify someone and is related to past, present or future physical or mental health conditions and related health care services is considered PHI. Protected information may include: PHI, ePHI, credit card information, information containing Social Security numbers and any other confidential or proprietary information.

You may only use protected health information without authorization for the following reasons:

- **Treatment.** You may share PHI with ACO Participants, physicians, nurses, technicians, students or other ACO Workforce Members as necessary to provide medical treatment or services.
- **Payment.** You may use and disclose PHI to an insurance carrier or third party payer to verify coverage and make sure that claims are billed and paid correctly.
- **ACO Operations.** PHI may be used for administration, planning and quality assessment purposes, functions which are necessary to run Connected Care and the operations of ACO Participants and ensure that all of our patients receive quality care.

Otherwise, PHI may only be disclosed when patients authorize it or when it is required by law. There are no exceptions.

How You Can Protect PHI

- Use the minimum amount of—and only the information you need—to do your job.
- Discuss patient information in private—where others cannot hear your conversation. Take all confidential information with you after faxing, copying or sharing in a meeting.
- If you find confidential information, notify Connected Care’s Compliance Office at 781-624-2190.

CODE OF ETHICS

- Make sure confidential information cannot be seen by others on your desk or computer screen.
- Only leave appointment information on a patient's home or office answering machine, fax or cell phone (voice or text). Do not mention the specific condition, treatment, health care provider's name or reason for the appointment.

You may not access another family member's or any other individual's record without a legitimate business purpose. Access to PHI can, and will, be monitored. Audits are performed when requested by a patient, and may be done on a random basis or if identified as high-risk, such as patients who are also workforce members, high-profile patients (e.g., local athletes or celebrities) and patient cases that may have been in the news. Confidential and proprietary information may include business information, financial information, marketing information, medical data (e.g., for a study), documents and plans associated with Connected Care and/or ACO Participants business and services, patient-specific information, personnel records, medical records, and salary and payroll information.

Everyone has an obligation to keep confidential and proprietary information safe and not to share it with anyone outside of Connected Care unless your role requires that you disclose the information for an authorized business purpose or you are required to disclose the information because of a government investigation.

Who You Should Contact

You should report any concerns you have about privacy to your leader and/or the Connected Care Compliance Office at 781-624-2190. You can make a report anonymously by calling 781-624-2191.

Protection of Research

Connected Care supports human subject research in accordance with all federal regulations and with approval by any applicable Institutional Review Board (IRB). Through research, advances in drug products, methods of treatment and medical devices, we have the potential to improve the lives of people in our community, state and nation.

ACO Participants and Workforce Members involved in research are responsible for protecting human subjects, maintaining confidentiality, and ensuring each participant is informed and freely consents to participate in the research. Falsification or manipulation of research results is illegal and compromises

the integrity of an individual as well as the organization. To the extent research grants and awards are received, funds must be used in accordance with federal laws and contractual requirements maintaining confidentiality, and ensuring each participant is informed and freely consents to participate in the research.

Workplace Conduct

ACO Participants and Workforce Members are committed to providing a healthy, safe, and productive workplace. The workplace must be free from discrimination and harassment based on race, religion, color, gender, gender identity, age, national origin, disability, disabled or veteran status, sexual orientation and/or any other status protected by state or federal law.

Safety and Protection of the Environment

Connected Care and its ACO Participants are committed to practices that promote a safe and healthy physical environment, prevent damage to the environment, reduce or avoid exposure to environmental hazards, enhance human and community resources and conserve natural resources. In addition, we are committed to the safe and responsible handling, storing, transporting, use and disposal of biomedical waste, hazardous materials and other waste products.

You must comply with applicable local, state and federal environmental laws. It is important that you learn and understand what is required for everyone's safety and protection.

Employee Relations and Equal Opportunity Employment

Connected Care adheres to all legal requirements regarding hiring, recruitment, retention, transfers, promotion and education. Our ACO Participants and Workforce Members value diversity and have no tolerance for discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, military status or other status protected under law.

We expect everyone to uphold and reinforce these principles and any related policies and procedures, regardless of your position with the ACO.

Harassment, Drug, Alcohol and Violence

Connected Care Participants and Workforce Members will not tolerate sexual harassment, comments, or other conduct that creates an intimidating or offensive work or patient care environment. Colleagues, patients, family members and visitors should always feel comfortable. This is particularly important with respect to patient visits, admissions, transfers and discharge operations. Complaints of inappropriate conduct will be reviewed promptly. Connected Care will not tolerate threats or acts of retaliation against ACO Participants or Workforce Members for reporting such matters. Everyone is expected to fully comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations relating to health, safety and the environment.

ACO Participants or Workforce Members who are under the influence of or adversely affected by any drug, controlled substance or alcohol are not permitted to treat patients, work, enter, or remain on work premises other than to seek medical treatment for these impairments. Such behavior on the part of an ACO Practitioner or Workforce Member will be addressed by Connected Care.

Other types of prohibited conduct include violent behavior, possession of or carrying firearms or other dangerous weapons, threats and the possession, use, distribution or sale of drugs, controlled substances or alcohol. The exceptions to this rule are the possession and use of a prescription medication in accordance with the prescribing practitioner's instructions and the possession, use or distribution of any controlled substances required in the conduct of our business.

Connected Care may use any lawful method of inquiry it considers necessary to determine whether any ACO Participant or Workforce Member has engaged in conduct that interferes with or adversely affects the ACO's business, including: theft from any ACO Practitioner or workforce member or any other person, suspicion of possession of drugs, alcohol, firearms or any other behavior prohibited or restricted by law. All Workforce Members are expected to participate in and fully cooperate with Connected Care's security efforts and inquiries.

Use of Social Media

Connected Care prohibits ACO Participants and Workforce Members from using social media while providing care to patients or conducting ACO business unless you have been approved by your manager to use social media for a legitimate business purpose.

CODE OF ETHICS

You are expected to use good judgment when using social media on personal time and should ensure that any opinions expressed are attributed to you and not Connected Care.

How You Can Comply

To maintain compliance with HIPAA, other laws and our standards, you should NOT:

- Post, blog, tweet or otherwise disclose any information about patients, research subjects or any other confidential information.
- Use social media to communicate with patients or post photos unless approved by your leader.
- Post harassing comments related to any provider, colleague or patient.
- Use your work email address to sign up for social media.

Use of Marketing Materials

Connected Care marketing and public affairs programs are designed to accurately describe Connected Care, its Participating Practitioners and its programs and clinical services.

ACO Participating Practitioners/Professionals are responsible for providing Connected Care with accurate information regarding practices and/or credentials and for reporting any inaccurate statements that may have been made in any materials, announcements and programs to their leader or the Compliance Office.

All Connected Care trademarks, trade names, logos and service marks can be used only with the permission of Connected Care's senior management. Everyone has a responsibility to ensure that the Connected Care name is not misused.

If You Have Questions

If you have any questions about Connected Care marketing materials or how they can be used, please contact the Compliance Office at 781-624-2190.

Conflicts of Interest, Gifts and Contributions

Conflicts of Interest

The Compliance Office has rules regarding conflicts of interest. ACO Participants may also be subject to other guidelines for conflicts of interest that apply to research activities, regardless of funding or funding source.

You have a duty to avoid conflicts of interest that may conflict, or appear to conflict, with the mission and business activities of Connected Care or its ACO Participants. This applies not only to your own direct and indirect interests, but also to those of your immediate family members. Workforce Members are required to disclose any relationships or activities that conflict, or appear to conflict, with Connected Care or ACO Participants to the Compliance Office.

If you have questions about whether a relationship poses a potential conflict, you should consult with the Compliance Office.

Disclosure Examples

The following situations would need to be disclosed to the Compliance Office:

- You have an ownership interest in a company that supplies products to Connected Care or its ACO Participants.
- You serve as a consultant for a local nursing home.
- You have a second job that interferes with your responsibilities at Connected Care.

Gift Policy

In some instances, a patient may wish to express gratitude to health care providers who provided care. Cards, candy, flowers or other nominal gifts may only be accepted if offered by the patient or family member. Gifts and other items of value are never to be solicited or accepted from patients or their families, including gift cards and tickets to sporting events, concerts and dinners.

What You Can Do

If someone wants to make a gift, encourage him/her to contact the Compliance Office at 781-624-2190.

Political Contributions

Connected Care or ACO Participant funds and assets may not be used for political campaign contributions. This prohibition applies to both direct contributions and indirect assistance of candidates (e.g., to Political Action Committees or PACS).

This Code does not prevent ACO Participants or Workforce Members from making personal contributions. However, under no circumstances will you be reimbursed by Connected Care for such contributions. You should consult with the Compliance Office before agreeing to participate in a political activity that could involve Connected Care or its ACO Participants.

Compliance Office

Connected Care has designated a Compliance Office to share information about ethical, legal and regulatory requirements and to ensure we meet applicable standards. The Compliance Office maintains independence from operational responsibilities and has direct access to Connected Care's CEO and Board of Directors. The Compliance Office is available as a resource and is committed to ensuring that all reports of potential misconduct are addressed, including ensuring that necessary corrective actions are implemented.

Reporting Process

Connected Care has established several ways to report incidents, situations, or ask questions related to quality or compliance.

Everyone has the responsibility to report a suspected quality or compliance concern. Doing nothing is not an option. You may report:

CODE OF ETHICS

- In writing: Send information to the Compliance Office via interoffice mail (mailbox #82), email (ACOCCompliance@ConnectedCareSEMA.org) or regular mail, c/o South Shore Health System, Mailbox #82.
- By phone: Call the Compliance Office at 781-624-2190.
- Use the Helpline: Call the Compliance Confidential Helpline at 781-624-2191 at any time. (24/7). Calls go to a confidential voice mailbox so there is no audit trail or opportunity for caller identification.

If you prefer to remain anonymous, please understand that the review process may be limited if the information you provide is not specific and we are unable to gather additional information. The more detail you provide, the more thoroughly we can investigate your concerns. Confidentiality will be maintained to the fullest extent possible; however, as an investigation progresses, continued anonymity may not be possible.

Non-Retaliation

Connected Care, its ACO Practitioners and Workforce Members shall not retaliate against anyone for reporting in good faith a violation or suspected violation of applicable law, this Code, our policies or procedures, or a general compliance concern.

Government Rules and Regulations

Connected Care, ACO Participants and Workforce Members must all comply with various laws and regulations (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, other state and federal health care programs). The Compliance Office is committed to providing you with the information you may need to comply.

Kickbacks and Referrals

The Anti-Kickback Statute and the Stark Law govern Connected Care, ACO Participants and Workforce Members' relationships with referring providers. It is important to understand that arrangements that appear to be "good business" in other businesses or industries could be illegal in health care. We all must comply with the rules that apply to the health care industry.

The Anti-Kickback statute is a criminal law that prohibits the knowing and willful payment of “remuneration” (anything of value) to induce or reward patient referrals or the generation of business involving any item or service payable by the federal health care programs (e.g., drugs, supplies, or health care services for Medicare or Medicaid patients).

The Physician Self-Referral Law, commonly referred to as the Stark Law, prohibits physicians from referring patients to receive “designated health services” payable by Medicare or Medicaid from entities with which the physician or an immediate family member has a financial relationship, unless an exception applies.

Scenarios that may raise concerns under these laws include:

- Offering or receiving anything of value to convince a patient or a patient’s family member to receive care from an ACO Participant.
- Offering anything of value to a physician that encourages a patient to receive care at an ACO Participant.
- Not requiring documentation for time spent performing contracted duties.
- Compensation paid for contracted services that is above the fair market value for those services.

Although there are exceptions to these laws, their interpretation is complex and should be undertaken by a professional who specializes in this area. Every Connected Care agreement involving compensation or referrals to an ACO Practitioner or a referral source must be reviewed and approved in advance and in writing by the Connected Care Compliance Office.

Emergency Treatment, Patient Transfers and Discharges (EMTALA)

You must comply with the EMTALA (Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act) law. This law was established to make sure that patients receive emergency care regardless of ability to pay and are not transferred from one facility to another unless it is medically necessary or appropriate.

Billing and Coding of Services

Billing for services not documented or provided could be considered a False Claim under federal law and may result in significant financial penalties. The False Claims Act provides “whistleblower

protections.” Connected Care will not retaliate against anyone for filing a report of a False Claims Act violation in good faith.

All ACO Practitioners and Workforce Members have an obligation to ensure that the services provided are supported by appropriate documentation and that claims submitted to payers accurately reflect services rendered. Coding and billing rules are complex and may vary by payer. It is critical that staff involved in charging, coding and billing familiarize themselves with internal policies and external requirements and raise potential issues immediately.

You should never charge, code or bill if the service was not provided and/or documented. Any concerns regarding billing, charging and coding should be referred to the Compliance Office.

You should also notify the Compliance Office before contacting government payers about Connected Care issues that are different than routine claims or payments. The Compliance Office will notify Connected Care management of any substantiated concerns or violations.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has adopted its own False Claims Act, modeled on the federal law. The state law prohibits knowing submissions of false or fraudulent claims for payment of state funds including the submission of claims for payment of health care services to MassHealth or other state programs. Penalties for violating the state False Claims Act include triple damages, monetary penalties for each false claim, and the costs of the government’s investigation or lawsuit. The state False Claims Act also contains whistleblower provisions.

If You See Something

If you believe any ACO Practitioner or Workforce Member is submitting or has submitted improper claims for reimbursement, you should contact the Compliance Office immediately at 781-624-2190, or you can call the Compliance Confidential Helpline at 781-624-2191.

Use of Assets and Resources

Connected Care and ACO Participants materials, supplies, facilities and equipment are to be used only for our business purposes.

Accuracy of Reports

You must ensure that Connected Care, ACO Participants' and Workforce Members' records accurately reflect operational, financial and strategic activities. This includes documentation relating to accounting and finance documents, expense accounts, time records, and reimbursement requests. It also applies to any and all clinical and treatment documentation.

Everyone is individually responsible for records within their area of responsibility and for complying with any laws, acts or statutes that govern the particular business area.

Physician Recruitment

The recruitment and retention of physicians requires special care on the part of both Connected Care and ACO Participants. Physician recruitment (especially of private practice physicians) has implications under the Anti-Kickback Statute, the Stark Law, and Internal Revenue Service rules governing tax-exempt status.

Each recruitment package or commitment should be in writing.

Government Investigations

Connected Care, ACO Participants and Workforce Members will cooperate in all government investigations by coordinating responses through the South Shore Health System Compliance Office and legal counsel.

If you learn of, or are contacted about any government investigation pertaining to Connected Care, ACO Participants or any Workforce Member or concerning any of your activities at Connected Care (including any contacts or attempted contacts with you at home or in your office), you must contact the Compliance Office immediately. If you are contacted by a representative from any governmental authority or agency, you should first confirm the agent's/investigator's identification and then refer any questions or requests for information to the Compliance Office.

CODE OF ETHICS

You should never, under any circumstances, destroy, fabricate, or alter any Connected Care, ACO Participant or any ACO related records, information, or documents in anticipation of a request for such documents from a court or any government agency. When communicating with any government agent or investigator, you should always tell the truth.

Closing Thoughts

This Code was developed to guide all of us to conduct ourselves with integrity and the highest ethical standards — to do the right thing. Your cooperation is vital to our efforts to be our Medicare Patient's trusted choice for health care services. Please review and understand the policies and requirements we have outlined here. If you have any questions, contact the Compliance Office.

Additional Resources

If you have any questions or concerns or suggestions for improvements — let us know. While we prefer that you reach out to a Connected Care leader first, as it allows for more immediate attention, you may contact an external organization without any fear of reprisal. The chart below provides internal and external contact information.

CODE OF ETHICS

If Your Concern Relates to...

- **Compliance:** You want to report a known or suspected compliance concern
- **HIPAA:** You want to report a privacy violation

You May...

- In writing: Send information to the Compliance Office via interoffice mail (mailbox #82), email (ACOCCompliance@ConnectedCareSEMA.org) or regular mail, c/o South Shore Health System, Mailbox #82.
- By phone: Call the Compliance Office at 781-624-2190.
- Use the Helpline: Call the Compliance Confidential Helpline at 781-624-2191 at any time. (24/7). Calls go to a confidential voice mailbox so there is no audit trail or opportunity for caller identification.

For a HIPAA violation, you may also contact the Office of Civil Rights, Regional Manager at:

Government Center	Phone: 617-565-1340
JFK Federal Building, Room 1875	Fax: 617-565-3809
Boston, MA 02203-0002	TDD: 617-565-1343

Sexual Harassment:

For a sexual harassment complaint, you may also contact the following external entities:

US EEOC	The Mass. Commission Against Discrimination
JFK Federal Building, Room 475	One Ashburton Place, Room 601
Boston, MA 02203	Boston, MA 02108
617-565-3200	617-727-3990



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