

Irwin County Hospital Indigent/Charity Care Policy & Procedure

Policy:

It is the policy of Hospital Authority of Irwin County d/b/a Irwin County Hospital (ICH) to provide services to all patients regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, handicap, or financial status.

It is the policy of ICH to provide services without charge to the citizens of the State of Georgia whose individual or family income is less than or equal to the 125% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG).

It is the policy of ICH to provide services at reduced charges to the citizens of the State of Georgia whose individual or family income is between 125% and 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG).

It is the policy of ICH to provide care without charge or at reduced charges to indigent and charity patients for all medically necessary types of services offered (Inpatient, Outpatient, and Emergency Room), but not charges included as contractual allowances, or payments or amounts payable from other third parties. It may include the patient's responsibility, such as deductibles and co-pays.

It is the policy of ICH to notify the public of patient's rights under the Trust Fund through the following means:

- Notices will be published in the local newspaper on an annual basis.
- Easily legible signs will be posted in English and Spanish in the emergency room, the business office, and the admissions area.
- Individual written notices will be offered to each patient upon registration to the hospital.
- Staff will be instructed to communicate the content of the notices to patients who are unable to read and assist individuals who have difficulty applying for uncompensated services.

Procedure:

At the time of registration, the patient will be informed of the availability of assistance under the Indigent Care Trust Fund and offered a Free and Reduced Charge Services Program Application. This application will be used to determine if the patient qualifies for an Indigent or Charity Care adjustment. The patient will be asked to complete and

sign the application. Patients who do not wish to apply for free or reduced services may refuse to complete the form.

The completed forms will be sent to the patient accounting department for eligibility determination based on information provided by the patient. Total gross income for the previous twelve months as reported on the latest Income Tax Return, the latest three months of pay stubs or bank statements, or written verification of wages from the patient's employer are examples of the tools used to try to verify financial condition. If a patient has no income, the patient is asked to complete a statement of no income. The application as well as all other documentation received from the patient will become property of ICH and will be held in confidence consistent with the requirements of applicable laws.

After determination is complete, the accounts that qualify for indigent and charity care adjustments will be adjusted accordingly. If the patient qualifies for an indigent adjustment, per the definition above, an indigent write-off adjustment will be done to reduce the patient's liability to zero. If the patient qualifies for a charity adjustment, per the definition above, the patient's liability will be reduced by a sliding scale according to their % of Federal Poverty Guidelines. The Guidelines that will be followed will be: 150% of FPG will get 50% discount, 175% of FPG will receive 40% discount; 185% of FPG will receive 30% discount; and 200% of FPG will receive a 20% discount. The indigent and charity adjustments are separately identifiable on the general ledger. The patient will be sent a letter informing them of the adjustment to their account and of any remaining liability. If it is determined that the patient did not qualify for either an indigent or charity adjustment, a letter will be sent to them explaining why they did not qualify and their liability remaining.

All indigent and charity accounts that have met the appropriate guidelines will be filed separately in the patient accounting office, and a log of the accounts will be kept for reporting purposes. The logs will be categorized between inpatient and outpatient, and will identify the patient's name, account number, date of service, annual family income, family size, total charges, total third party payments, patient liability (for charity accounts), amount of indigent/charity adjustment, date of indigent/charity adjustment and patient's county of residence.

In all instances this policy is intended to comply with all requirements of the Indigent Care Trust Fund and related guidelines.

Effective: June 1, 2011