Vendor Access Support Procedure

The objective of the Vendor Access Support Procedure is to outline procedural guidelines referenced in the Ascension Vendor Access Policy. Vendor Representatives are responsible for complying to the guidelines in this document. Failure to comply with these guidelines constitutes a violation of the Ascension Vendor Access Policy. This Vendor Access Support Procedure is subject to change in Ascension's sole and absolute discretion with or without advance notice and it is the Vendor Representative's responsibility to keep informed and compliant with it.

Section 1: Criteria to Enter

Credentialing Detail

- Ascension uses third-party credentialing service, symplr, for vendor credentialing services. Vendor representatives are required to complete credentialing through symplr. Credentialing levels, determined by the vendor representative when registering, are designated as follows:
    - Level 1 - All Access
        - Access: Full access to facility including patient care and procedure areas
        - Granted to: Vendor Representatives assisting with clinical procedures and direct patient care
        - Examples: Orthopedic, spine, trauma procedures
    - Level 2 - Patient Care Access
        - Access: Enables access to engage with Ascension Associates in patient care areas or areas where access to Protected Health Information is available. This does not provide access to any procedure areas.
        - Granted to: Vendor Representatives performing product, equipment or general maintenance, or education/in servicing where patients or protected health information is present.
        - Examples: Pacemaker calibration, maintenance on equipment that stores protected health information
    - Level 3 Administrative/Provider Access
        - Access: Enables access to all general and administrative areas of a facility and ambulatory offices and pharmacy. This does not provide access to patient care or procedure areas.
        - Granted to: Vendor Representatives performing product, equipment, or general maintenance, or education/in servicing where patients or protected health information is not present.
        - Examples: New technology demonstrations, clinical education
- Review **Appendix A** for additional examples
- Per credentialing requirements, minimum requirements for entry into acute and non-acute sites of care include:
    - All Levels of symplr access:
        - Background check
        - HIPAA training

- Insurance
- Levels 1 and 2
  - Additional Immunizations
    - Negative TB Test
    - Hepatitis B
    - Influenza
    - MMR
    - TDAP

Sign-in, Badge, and Dress Code Requirements Detail

- A Vendor Credentialing System registration kiosk will be located in all acute sites and the location may be different at each acute site. Locations may include; in The Resource Group Department (which may be at a different location than the facility); at the facility entrance and/or in the Operating Room.
- Vendor Representatives must register at the Ascension Participant's designated Vendor Credentialing System access point to receive their time/date sensitive identification for each visit. Vendor Representatives must display at all times a clearly visible time stamped badge, printed through the Vendor Credentialing System kiosk while at an acute site of care.
- Badge information must include:
  - Credentialing Level
  - Vendor Name
  - Vendor Representative Name
  - Valid Dates
  - Appointment Time
- If visiting a non-acute, ambulatory location with no kiosk, Vendor Representatives are required to utilize mobile application technology to display a mobile badge that verifies Vendor Representative is credentialed and checked in.
- Hospital-designated surgical attire must be worn in designated restricted and semi-restricted areas of the hospital.
  - Additionally, in designated areas, Vendor Representatives must wear an identifying bouffant cap provided by the facility, as well as any other personal protective equipment (PPE), such as shoe covers, masks/beard covers, etc.
  - Vendor Representatives may be restricted as to where they can wear their assigned surgical attire upon leaving the restricted or semi-restricted areas.
  - Under no circumstances should hospital-designated surgical attire be worn off of the property.

Section 2: Approved Circumstances for Entry

Vendor Representatives are not permitted in patient care areas, nursing units, emergency room, outpatient clinics or other patient treatment areas where patient care is provided unless specifically requested by the hospital medical, clinical, or administrative staff.

Medical Procedure/Direct Patient Assistance (includes instrument and implant drop-off/pickup)

- Approved procedures for vendor support can be found HERE.
- A list of approved products that may necessitate vendor support can be found on The Resource Group's website HERE.
- Vendor Representatives may enter at a physician's request to provide direct patient assistance with products or equipment that require advanced expertise. A list of approved products meeting that criteria can be found on The Resource Group's website HERE.
- While the Vendor Representative may be present at the point of care, if so designated, they are not to open any sterile product unless the Vendor Representative has received specific permission from the physician and the local facility permits this practice.
    - When opening a sterile product, the day / month of expiration must be communicated.
    - Vendor Representatives will not retrieve patient tissue or blood from the blood bank at any time.

In-Servicing/Education

- Education/training refers to providing clinical instruction on how to appropriately and properly use the product, medication, or service.
- The approval process for in-servicing and product education/training must be initiated by Vendor Representative completing and submitting the training request form housed on The Resource Group's website.
    - Any false information submitted on this form will be considered a violation of this policy.
- Providing product or medication information is not considered education/training. Providing medication information deemed necessary for appropriate, indicated use must include approval from the National Pharmacy Education Team.
- Vendor Representatives will schedule an in-service at least 30 days in advance with The Resource Group.
- All in-services will be conducted in The Resource Group Department or designated education area.

Product, Equipment and Facility Maintenance

- Any Vendor Representative seeking access to an Ascension Participant facility for the purpose of performing maintenance services must schedule service at least thirty (30) days in advance, with The Resource Group Lead or The Resource Group's designee (e.g., information technology, clinical engineering or facilities personnel).

Inventory Counting

- An approved appointment is required from The Resource Group onsite Operations Team.

Samples Drop-off

- See Samples, Vouchers, Coupons section of Policy Section 4 Procedures: Incoming Products and Equipment in this document.

Section 4: Incoming Products and Equipment

Demonstration and Loaner Equipment

- Vendor Representatives are strictly prohibited from providing demonstration model or loaner equipment to an Ascension Participant without having first submitted a proposal for such equipment to The Resource Group Lead and having received a zero-dollar purchase order for such equipment prior to its arrival on the premises.
- All equipment brought in for demonstration/evaluation must have a safety check completed by biomedical engineering or clinical staff before the equipment can be used at an Ascension facility.

Off-Contract Product

- Vendor Products and/or services not expressly included within a contract executed between The Resource Group, Ascension, or a designated GPO, and the Vendor or product for which no purchase order was issued in advance (collectively referred to herein as "off-contract products") may not be introduced or provided to the members of the medical staff or Associates of Ascension for use.
- Unless otherwise stated within a national contract with The Resource Group, any off-contract products that are provided to and used by Associates in violation of Ascension policy shall be deemed Vendor-donated product. Vendor shall not invoice for, nor receive any reimbursement for such off-contract product from Ascension.
- The Resource Group recognizes that there may be instances where patient care dictates use of an off-contract product. In such rare circumstances, the physician requesting use of the off-contract product, with assistance from the Vendor Representative, may apply for an exception to the off-contract product policy.
    - Please be aware that the exception process is time consuming and may take up to one hundred and eighty (180) days to resolve.

Loaner Instrument Sets

- Immediate Use Steam Sterilization (IUSS) is prohibited except in the event of an emergency.
- See Short Term and Long Term Loaner Set Management Procedure for further details.

Samples, Vouchers, and Coupons

- Acute Locations
    - Vendor Representatives may distribute ONLY the following Samples, Vouchers, or Coupons, via mail or in-person, to Ascension Participant sites:
        - Specialty infant formula formulated for patients with medical conditions or dietary restrictions
        - Glucose meters
        - Pediatric and adult nutritionals/supplements
    - In addition, Vouchers and Coupons for approved pharmaceuticals are permitted; however, no physical pharmaceutical Samples are permitted. List of approved pharmaceuticals

- Non-Acute Locations (includes hospital outpatient departments and other ambulatory settings operated as departments of the hospital)
    - Vendor Representatives may distribute ONLY the following Samples, Vouchers, or Coupons, via mail or in-person, to Ascension Participant sites:
        - Specialty infant formula formulated for patients with medical conditions or dietary restrictions
        - Glucose meters
        - Pediatric and adult nutritionals/supplements
        - Approved pharmaceuticals (both Samples and Vouchers/Coupons) List of approved pharmaceuticals
    - Samples provided to hospital outpatient departments must remain within those departments; they may not be distributed to hospital inpatient departments or other inpatient settings.
    - When dropping off approved samples, Vendor Representatives may not access the facility beyond the front desk of the site or department.
        - Samples Request – Vendor Representatives will not access physicians. A facility/department associate may deliver the paperwork/tablet to the physician for signature while the Vendor Representative waits at the front desk.
        - Samples Drop off – Vendor Representatives will not access physicians. A facility/department associate designated by the physician may sign to confirm receipt.

Section 5: Inventory Management

- Unless performed at the request of The Resource Group during an approved & supervised consignment management visit as permitted through The Resource Group's contract or otherwise approved by The Resource Group, Vendor Representatives will not remove or restock hospital-owned inventory, consigned inventory, or equipment at any time.
- Vendor Representatives may perform consignment inventory counts at The Resource Group's request. The expectation is that consignment reconciliations occur at minimum twice per year.

Section 7: Post-Acute Representatives

- Additional Post-Acute Representative requirements (including Ascension Post-Acute Representatives) are set forth below.
    - Post-Acute Representatives may only enter Ascension Participant locations after contact is initiated via Case Management discharge planning software or referral by Case Management or Nursing staff.
    - Post-Acute Representatives must check in with Case Management staff upon arrival and check out at the conclusion of any on-site visit.
    - Post-Acute Representatives are not permitted to access any patient care unit or area other than the unit where the referred patient is located and will not solicit additional referrals while onsite.
    - Post-Acute Representatives will not have access to participate in patient care rounds, huddles, or meetings where patient or department information is discussed.
    - Case Management staff will report all non-compliance to Case Management Leader(s) who will escalate via enforcement processes set forth in Section 8.

    - Case Management staff may ask Post-Acute Representatives to leave the facility at any time.
- Post-Acute In-Services must be approved by Case Management **before** scheduling via the standard In-Servicing/Education process referenced in section 2.2 of this procedure. Case Management will not be responsible for scheduling approved In-Service presentations.
- Failure to comply with these provisions may result in consequences as described in Ascension's Vendor Access Administrative Policy, Section 8. In the event of a conflict between this Vendor Access Support Procedure and the Vendor Access Policy, the Vendor Access Policy shall control.

Appendix A

Credentialing Level Examples

Level 1 – All Access

- Medical implants/devices
  - Orthopedics
  - Spine
  - Trauma
  - Cardiac Rhythm Management
  - Interventional Cardiology
  - Interventional Radiology
  - GI/Endoscopy
  - Aortic Intervention
  - Ophthalmics
  - Breast Reconstruction
  - Neurosurgery
- Medical sharps disposal
- Equipment repair or installation in procedure areas
  - Medical gas
  - Patient lifts
  - Suction equipment
  - Monitors
  - Lights

Level 2 – Patient Care Access

- Equipment repair or installation in patient care areas
  - Beds
  - Medical gas
  - Suction equipment
  - Patient Exam (blood pressure, etc.)
  - Monitors
  - Lights
  - Medication carts
  - Monitored/locked supply storage containers
- Education/In servicing in patient care areas

Level 3 – Administrative/Provider Access

- New technology demonstrations in general/administrative areas
- Education/In servicing in general areas
- Equipment repairs in general/administrative areas
- Visiting ambulatory or pharmacy staff