

Regional Psychiatry Physician Coverage Policy

1. Introduction

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (“VCH”) and Providence Health Care (“PHC”) seek to ensure psychiatry departments within the region are appropriately staffed by psychiatrists in order to provide high quality and timely patient care.

1.1 Purpose

This policy sets out an expedited process to facilitate staffing at VCH sites under urgent circumstances such as (but not limited to): unexpected staffing shortages, wildfires, pandemic coverage, CST implementation.

Establishing a regional pool for a group of psychiatrists who are already credentialed and privileged and in good standing at a VCH or PHC site will enable VCH to provide a more timely response to individual site needs and reduce the administrative work for the medical leader and the psychiatrist.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all psychiatrists who are credentialed and privileged in the “Active” staff category at a VCH or PHC site.

- Members of the Regional Psychiatry Temporary Pool will be available to any VCH Psychiatry department
 - Decision to engage a physician from the regional pool at an additional site will be at the discretion of the site’s Psychiatry department head and in agreement with the Psychiatrist.

2. Policy

2.1 Psychiatry Regional Pool Membership

The Regional Pool of Psychiatry are those Psychiatrists who can work at any VCH Psychiatry Department on request without further administrative requirements such as interim privileges.

Process for VCH Privileged Psychiatrists

Once the Psychiatrist moves into the Active medical staff category at a VCH site, they will automatically be added to the regional pool.

- The physician must remain in good standing at VCH in order to participate in the Regional Psychiatry Temporary Pool.
- The physician will be added to the regional pool in the Temporary medical staff category.

- In situations where a physician has been flagged for a disciplinary issue or where there is an on-going investigation, the physician will be temporarily removed from the regional pool.

Letters of appointment and reappointment to the Active category of medical staff will clearly delineate the physician's addition to the Regional Psychiatry pool as "Temporary" medical staff.

The physician's primary site will continue to be the site where they are in the Active staff category.

Process for PHC Privileged Psychiatrists

Once the Psychiatrist moves into the Active medical staff category at a PHC site, they will be invited to apply for cross-appointment to the VCH medical staff in the Regional Psychiatry Temporary Pool in the "Temporary" medical staff category.

Such Psychiatrists will receive letters of appointment and reappointment from VCH that specify the physician's addition to the Regional Psychiatry pool as "Temporary" medical staff.

The physician's primary site will continue to be the site where they are in the Active Medical staff category.

2.2 Regional Psychiatry Pool Requirements

To be added to the Regional Pool and to remain within the Regional Pool, the Psychiatrist must have Active Psychiatry privileges at a VCH or PHC site and must remain in good standing at VCH.

In situations where a Psychiatrist has been flagged for a disciplinary issue (behavioural or clinical) or where there is an ongoing investigation, the physician will automatically be temporarily removed from the Regional Pool upon notice of the disciplinary issue or concern.

If a Psychiatrist is on a leave of absence from their primary site, they will be temporarily removed from the Regional Pool. In specific circumstances and on a case-by-case basis, the Regional Head of Psychiatry may exercise discretion to allow a Psychiatrist to remain in the Regional Pool even if they are on a leave of absence from their primary site.

2.3 Engaging a Psychiatrist from the Regional Pool

The decision to engage a Psychiatrist from the Regional Pool at an additional site will be at the discretion of the site's Psychiatry Department Head or Local Medical Director with agreement from the Psychiatrist.

The invitation will clearly delineate which shifts, or which specific time period, the Psychiatrist is invited to cover. The physician is only permitted to use their temporary privileges and provide health care at the site during the periods outlined in the invitation.

2.4 Limitations & Restrictions of Regional Pool Privileges

Membership in the Regional Pool creates no entitlement to work at any VCH site and no obligation to accept shifts at any VCH site, aside from a Psychiatrist's primary site.

No member of the Regional Pool may use their Regional Pool temporary privileges at any VCH site without invitation and permission from the site's Psychiatry Department Head or Local Medical Director.