

# ED OBSERVATION UNIT: GENERAL OBSERVATION GUIDELINES NYC H+H KINGS COUNTY HOSPITAL CENTER

*General Observation Guidelines apply for all ED observation patients.*

## **INCLUSION CRITERIA**

- Patients deemed to be **unsafe discharge** but has a **definitive diagnosis** with a clear and **specific plan made by the ED provider** that can be **measurably followed up** and treated within a **48 hour time period**.
  - Examples include the following:
    - Asymptomatic hypokalemia requiring repletion
    - Routine consult necessary before discharge as with pulmonary, rheumatology (consult placed by ED provider)
    - Teaching for wound care, medication self-administration
- Both ED attending and Observation attending agree that plan can be carried out in a 48 hour time period

## **EXCLUSION CRITERIA**

- Unstable or significantly abnormal vital signs (may include: hypotension, HR  $\geq$  110, SBP  $\geq$  220 or  $\leq$  90, DBP  $\geq$  110, RR  $\geq$  30)
- Neutropenic fever
- No other underlying cause leading to definitive diagnosis (e.g. undifferentiated abdominal pain with persistent nausea, vomiting leading to hypokalemia)
- No acute exacerbation of chronic pain as in sickle cell pain crisis, intractable abdominal pain, intractable back pain
- Altered Mental Status, GCS  $<$  13 or significant change from baseline
- Exacerbation of psychiatric condition (i.e. psychosis, concern for threat to others or patient him/herself) or severe behavioral disorder

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*Revised by T. Ahmad MD, R. Balakrishnan MD, A. Cai, MD, and S. Brewster MD*

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***INTERVENTIONS***

- Serial vital signs and exams every 4-6 hours
- Interventions per ED provider placement in observation
- Appropriate consults obtained
- Pre-procedure labs as needed
- NPO or diet as indicated
- Home medications as indicated for co-morbid conditions
- Outpatient medications as indicated

***DISPOSITION***

**Home:**

- Stable vital signs
- Met goals of treatment plan
- Benign observation course
- Resolution of symptoms
- PO tolerance
- Appropriate and adequate follow up plan

**Admission:**

- Unstable vital signs
- Significant testing abnormalities
- Significant complication
- PO intolerance
- Unsafe home environment or inability to provide self-care
- Another acute process becomes apparent that requires hospitalization
- Does not meet discharge criteria after observation period

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