BULLHOOK
Community Health Center

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POLICY AND PROCEDURE

INFORMED CONSENT **3013**

Informed consent is the process by which a fully informed patient can participate in choices about his/her health care. It originates from the legal and ethical right the patient has to direct what happens to his/her body and from the ethical duty of the physician to involve the patient in his/her health care.

The most important goal of informed consent is that the patient has an opportunity to be an informed participant in health care decisions. It is generally accepted that complete informed consent includes a discussion of the following elements:

- the nature of the decision/procedure
- reasonable alternatives to the proposed intervention
- the relevant risks, benefits, and uncertainties related to each alternative
- assessment of patient understanding
- the acceptance of the intervention by the patient

In order for the patient's consent to be valid, he/she must be considered competent to make the decision at hand and his/her consent must be voluntary. It is easy for coercive situations to arise in medicine. Patients often feel powerless and vulnerable. To encourage voluntariness, the provider should make clear to the patient that he/she is participating in a decision, not merely signing a form. With this understanding, the informed consent process should be seen as an invitation to him/her to participate in his/her health care decisions. The provider is also obligated to provide a recommendation and share the reasoning process with the patient. Comprehension on the part of the patient is equally as important as the information provided. Consequently, the discussion should be carried on in layperson's terms and the patient's understanding should be assessed along the way.

Bullhook Community Health Center providers will obtain informed consent on all invasive procedures that involve risk to the patient, e.g. biopsy, excision, toenail avulsion, etc. Informed consent will be obtained by using the approved consent form (attached). The consent form will become a permanent part of the patient's medical record.
The provider performing the procedure may not act as witness for the informed consent.

Cindy Smith Date 5-19-15

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

[signature] Date May 19, 2015

CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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