

Logo for All Policies Site - CHI Franciscan Health System	Origination	03/2014	Owner	Michael Cox: SVP Mission Integration
	Last Approved	10/2023		
	Effective	10/2023	Policy Area	Corporate Ethics/ Privacy
	Last Revised	10/2023	Applicability	VMFH and its affiliated entities, as applicable
	Next Review	10/2026		

Reproductive Healthcare, 392.00

PURPOSE

Provide general guidance in the area of reproductive health care.

POLICY

Virginia Mason Franciscan Health System-Wide

Virginia Mason Franciscan Health provides high quality health care to everyone in our care, recognizing each person's inherent dignity as a unique expression of life. We value informed consent and all clinicians are supported in disclosing all medically appropriate options with their patients, including interventions not available at our facilities. We do not provide direct abortions or in-vitro fertilization in any of our facilities. When a pregnant patient arrives with a serious pathological condition that puts the their life at risk, our clinicians are supported to pursue operations, treatments, and medications within the standard of care that have as their direct purpose the cure of a proportionately serious pathological condition even if this indirectly results in the termination of the pregnancy.

Clinicians, staff, patients, and their health care representatives should request an ethics consultation when a pregnant patient arrives with a serious pathological condition that puts the life of a pregnant person at risk of an irreversible complication, impairment of a bodily function, organ, part, or life is at risk. If the threat of harm is immediate, interventions should be provided and not be delayed while either waiting for a response from a request for an ethics consult and while the ethics consult process continues. See: Initiating Ethics Consult Policy, #370.00

VMFH Catholic Facilities:

The Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services (ERDs) provides moral

guidance in Catholic health settings. Catholic entities do not provide elective sterilization. Procedures within the standards of care that induce sterility (whether temporary or permanent) are permitted when the direct intention is to cure or alleviate a serious pathological condition. Clinicians, staff, patients, and surrogate decision-makers consult with the Ethics Consult Service when ethical guidance is needed involving reproductive health care. See: Initiating Ethics Consult Policy #370.00

Catholic Sponsored Entities:

- VMFH St. Anthony Hospital in Gig Harbor, WA
- VMFH St. Clare Hospital in Lakewood, WA
- VMFH St. Elizabeth Hospital in Enumclaw, WA
- VMFH St. Francis Hospital in Federal Way, WA
- VMFH St. Joseph Medical Center in Tacoma, WA

VMFH Non-Catholic Facilities:

Clinicians and their patients in non-Catholic facilities do not use the Ethical and Religious Directives (ERDs) for moral guidance, unless they themselves are Catholic. Non-Catholic facilities can provide a range of elective reproductive services.

Non-Catholic Facilities:

- VMFH St. Anne Hospital in Burien, WA
- VMFH St. Michael Medical Center in Silverdale, WA
- VMFH Virginia Mason Medical Center in Seattle, WA

Emergency Contraception for Sexual Assault Victims:

For all of our hospitals with Emergency Departments: Virginia Mason Franciscan Health System supports the hospital's obligations under WAC 246-320-370 for emergency contraception provisions for sexual assault victims. The Emergency Department (ED) must provide emergency contraception as a treatment option to any person with ovaries who seeks treatment as a result of a sexual assault. The Emergency Department provider must provide each patient with medically and factually accurate and unbiased written and oral information about emergency contraception in a language the patient understands, the option to be provided emergency contraception, and must immediately provide emergency contraception, as defined in WAC 246-320-010, to each victim of sexual assault if the victim requests it and if it is not medically contraindicated. Refer to: [Sexual Assault Victims Emergency Contraception Options Policy, #826.75](#)

REFERENCES

[The Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services, Sixth edition](#) (See: Issues in Care for the Beginning of Life Introduction and ERDs 45, 47, 48, & 49; The Professional-Patient Relationship

Introduction and ERDs 26-28; and Collaborative Arrangements with Other Health Care Organizations and Providers Introduction and ERDs 70 & 75)

WAC 246-320-370: Emergency Contraception for Sexual Assault Victims.

REQUIRED REVIEW

Senior Vice President of Mission

Division Vice President of Ethics and Theology

Chief Medical Officer

Chief Nursing Officer

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
Final Step	Joan VanSickle: Document Control Coordinator	10/2023
Reviewer	Laura Webster: Div VP Ethics	10/2023
	Michael Cox: SVP Mission Integration	10/2023