

# Ready, Set, Go: Know Your Risks

*Leadership Tool for a Learning Organization*

## Hospital Relations with Police

### WHY ARE HOSPITAL RELATIONS WITH POLICE IMPORTANT?

- Maintaining appropriate relations with police can enhance the safety of patients, staff, visitors, and the reputation of the facility and police department as trusted members of the community.
- Because healthcare providers and police have different roles and duties, providers must maintain a cooperative attitude toward law enforcement, while safeguarding their own rights and those of their patients.<sup>1</sup>
- Having a clear policy or protocol in place to guide staff concerning law enforcement response to a hospital disturbance can avoid the risk of harm to patients, staff, and police/security.

### DID YOU ASK?

- Has an individual been designated to act as a liaison with the local police department to establish and maintain open lines of communication and discuss issues of mutual concern?
- Does your organization have a policy to guide employees and contracted staff in responding to police requests for statements, affidavits, and the serving of search warrants concerning events occurring on hospital premises?
- Does your organization have a policy for disclosure of protected health information to police that reflects HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) privacy standards and state privacy law, if applicable?
- Does your organization have a policy in place to address the use of force and weapons on patients by hospital police and hospital security?

### Need More Information?

As a member of ECRI Institute's risk and patient safety program, you and your staff can access guidance outlining strategies for hospital relations with police:

- ▶ [Guidance: Hospital Relations with Police](#)
- ▶ [Guidance: Hospital Security](#)
- ▶ [Guidance: Violence in Healthcare Facilities](#)
- ▶ [Self-Assessment: Safety Management](#)

ECRI Institute can help you with all of your patient safety, quality, and risk management projects. E-mail us at [hrc@ecri.org](mailto:hrc@ecri.org).

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<sup>1</sup> George JE. Law and emergency care. St. Louis (MO): Mosby-Year Book; 1980.