Scope:
MHS practicing physicians/Medical Staff/Observer Provider, Medical Staff Department, International Services, GME, Physician representatives, international observers, and MHS affiliated international hospitals and international universities.

Purpose:
To provide a mechanism, in compliance with The Joint Commission (TJC), Center for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS), and Health Information Privacy and Accountability Act (HIPAA) guidelines that will permit individuals to observe members of Methodist Healthcare System (MHS) Medical Staff while rounding and/or treating patients on hospital premises.

Policy:
Medical Staff members or affiliated partners requesting approval for international individuals to observe while rounding and/or treating patients at MHS shall contact the International Services Office to begin the application process.

The International Services Office shall provide written communication with instructions for completing the required paperwork to the international applicant being considered for approval to observe a member of the MHS Medical Staff/Observer Provider. The communication shall include:

- Policy
- Privilege Application
- Health Screening Attestation
- Observing Provider Authorization Agreement
- Privacy and Confidentiality Acknowledgment
- Observation Agreement and Release from Liability
- Patient Consent for Observer
- Observer Agreement and Orientation Information

When the completed paperwork has been returned, it will be reviewed by the International Services and Medical Staff Services departments and then forwarded to the Chief Medical Officer for approval.

Application must be submitted by:
- Medical Students and Specialty/Fellowship Students  
  - Two months in advance if the physician being observed has not been identified by the observer
- International Physicians  
  - One month in advance if the physician being observed has not been identified by the observer
Please note the following:

- No funding will be provided to observers by Methodist Healthcare System. All observers should make arrangements for housing accommodation and meals prior to arrival.

- Visas must be obtained individually. Methodist Healthcare System is unable to sponsor visas for observers.

- Observer must have health insurance with coverage in the US, to cover accidents, illness, etc. while performing the observerships.

**Documentation:**
A completed electronic version of the application and of the Observer/Provider Agreement will be kept on file in the Medical Staff – International Services shared files. The completed Patient Consent for Observer form will be kept in the patient’s file.

**Definitions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Medical Staff, Observer Provider</td>
<td>Physician with privileges to practice at MHS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Medical Student Observer</td>
<td>International student who is enrolled in an international accredited medical school to become a physician.</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Medical Specialty Student Observer</td>
<td>International doctor who is enrolled in an international accredited medical school and obtaining specialty training.</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Practicing Physician Observer</td>
<td>International physician who is currently practicing in his/her country and would like to observe a procedure for learning and shared knowledge purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Doctor, ECFMG Candidate Observer</td>
<td>International doctor preparing for ECFMG examination interested in observing for learning and preparation purposes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Director for MHS</td>
<td>Doctor who will lead the MHS and international university observer relationship. Coordinating rotations and evaluations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Program Director</td>
<td>University employee who will lead and work with the Program Director for MHS to coordinate the rotations and evaluations for international student and specialty student observers.</td>
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Eligibility:
Observerships may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

Individuals who may be eligible for observership include the following:

- International residents in good standing in an accredited medical residency program.
- Individuals who have not yet graduated from medical school, but who are currently enrolled.
- Practicing international physicians.

Prerequisites:

- All Observers
  - Health insurance with coverage in the US
  - Fluency in both written and spoken English.
- Medical Students or Specialty Program Students
  - Passing scores on the TOEFL exam, Minimum Score
    - Paper-Based, 550 (5.5 Oral and 5.5 TWE, required) OR
    - Computer based, 213 (5.5 Oral and 5.5 TWE, required) OR
    - Internet based, 68
  - OR Passing Scores on the IELTS exam
    - Minimum overall score of 6
    - Minimum score of 5.5 in the individual sections
  - Medical studies of at least three years in an accredited international medical program OR
  - Enrolled in the last year of a specialty or fellowship accredited international program in the country of origin.
- International Practicing Physicians
  - Medical License in the country of origin

Rules for Observership

1. The observer must obtain prior written authorization from the International Services Office.
2. The observer must wear appropriate photo identification at all times when in a hospital, and must abide by all policies, rules, regulations, and bylaws of Methodist Healthcare System, the Methodist Healthcare International Observer policy, and the home institution. Photo identification will be provided through the Human Resources office upon clearance of application by Medical Staff Department and request sent to HR.
3. The observer must be supervised by an MHS Medical Staff member at all times when in the Hospital.
4. The observer must be introduced to the patient as an observer, and the sponsor must request the patient's permission for the observer to be present at the time of clinical visit,
procedure, or other patient services. If the patient declines to allow the observer's presence, the observer must leave the area.

5. The observer cannot make patient chart entries (electronic or hard copy). He/she may not make copies of patient charts (paper or electronic).

6. There is a maximum length for each individual observership visit per individual observer.

   a. International Physician
   b. International Specialty Student
   c. International Medical Student

7. The observer must complete an evaluation of the rotation upon its completion. The evaluation must be completed and returned to International Services and will be shared with Medical Staff Services.

8. MHS may, at its sole discretion, terminate this observership without recourse to due process or appeal process.

9. The observer will not receive any academic credit for the experience by MHS. Educational credit may be granted at the discretion of the student's academic program.

10. The observer is not a student, resident, or medical staff member at MHS, and must not represent him/herself as such. The experience is properly characterized as an "observership."

11. The following activities are NOT permissible for observers:

   a. Observers will not be allowed to write orders, initiate therapy, or attend patients, other than in conjunction with the medical staff provider.
   b. Observers will not be allowed to write in the patient's chart.

12. The following activities ARE permissible for observers:

   a. Participation in grand rounds, seminars, or other didactic activities
   b. Participation in case conferences or chart rounds. Observers who are engaged in this activity are asked to sign a document acknowledging the responsibilities of confidentiality. Enclosed in Application.
   c. May observe walking rounds with the supervising medical staff or designee.
   d. May view and discuss patient interactions with the supervising medical staff or designee, if the patient has agreed to permit observation.
   e. May view and discuss videotapes of patient evaluations, if the patient has agreed to permit observation and videotaping.
   f. Medical Student Observers may do history and physical, but these should not serve in the place of the history and physical done by the attending physician.
   g. May utilize software and hard copy educational resources (teaching software, books, and journals) of the Briscoe Medical Library. Access to the internet from computers in the Library, or departments will be in accordance with current standard MHS policies.
Acceptance into an Observership position will not constitute a precedent or guarantee acceptance into further observerships or programs sponsored by MHS.

<table>
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<th>Responsible Party</th>
<th>Actions</th>
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| Applicant/Observer                       | 1. Request Application to International Services (Complete online when ready)  
2. Submit Completed Application to International Services  
3. If you have an established relationship with the physician you are interested in observing, coordinate dates of observation and signature of Medical Staff Provider Authorization Agreement with doctor and submit to International Services.  
4. Introduce oneself to patient  
5. Inform the patient of his/her role in their care and obtain patient signature on Patient Consent for Observer and include in patient chart. |
| Medical Staff/ Observer Provider         | 1. Inform International Services or Program Director for MHS if approached by an observer and interested in being a provider, so International Services may begin process.  
2. Sign Medical Staff Provider Authorization Agreement.  
3. Inform the patient of the observer’s role in their care and obtain patient signature on Patient Consent for Observer and include in patient chart.  
4. Responsibility for the observer’s work will be that of the medical staff provider.  
5. At completion of the observation, a completed observer evaluation must be submitted to Program Director for MHS and University Program Director.  
6. Inappropriate use of an observer may subject the Observer Provider to corrective actions. |
| Medical Staff Department                 | 1. Receive application from International Services.  
2. Coordinate dates of observation and signature of Medical Staff Provider Authorization Agreement with doctor.  
3. Inform the patient of the observer’s role in their care and obtain patient signature on Patient Consent for Observer and include in patient chart.  
4. Responsibility for the observer’s work will be that of the medical staff provider.  
5. At completion of the observation, a completed observer evaluation must be submitted to Program Director for MHS and University Program Director.  
6. Inappropriate use of an observer may subject the Observer Provider to corrective actions. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title: International Medical Staff Observer</th>
<th>ID/version:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective Date: 03/01/2012</td>
<td>HCA Reference: none</td>
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<tr>
<th>Services.</th>
<th>2. Submit to Chief Medical Officer for approval.</th>
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<td>3. Request badge for observer from HR.</td>
<td>4. Enforce corrective actions if there is inappropriate use of an observer.</td>
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<tr>
<th>International Services</th>
<th>1. Send applications to international requestors. (direct to website when updated) CC Physician Representative and Program Director for MHS in order to keep in the loop.</th>
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<tr>
<td>2. Receive application and review to make sure all criteria is met.</td>
<td>3. Submit approved applications to Medical Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Send applicant &amp; teaching institution acceptance/rejection letter.</td>
<td>5. Receive completed diploma from International University Program Director and coordinate with medical Staffing for signatures and presentation ceremony.</td>
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<td>6. Present provider with thank you note.</td>
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<th>Physician Representatives</th>
<th>1. Inform International Services if approached by an international observer and interested in being a provider, so International Services may begin process</th>
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<tr>
<td>2. Assist International Services in obtaining medical staff providers if possible &amp; when necessary.</td>
<td>3. Increase awareness of international observer program &amp; process with physicians.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>International Program Director for Methodist Healthcare System</th>
<th>1. Contact for agreement authorization.</th>
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<tr>
<td>2. If international observer does not already have, coordinate with provider doctor, find a receiving doctor.</td>
<td>3. Notify local physicians about program according to agreement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Coordinate a welcome orientation physician and hospital tour as well as Medical Staff Services for policy overview, International Services for</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>University Program Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Design curriculum for observer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Contact for agreement authorization.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Provide Observer Provider with University evaluation.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gather completed observer evaluation from International Program Director for MHS.</td>
<td>4. Gather completed observer evaluation from International Program Director for MHS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Elaborate and send completed diploma to International Services for completion.</td>
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</tr>
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- meet and greet and HR for badge.
- Coordinate observer evaluation.
- Inform observer of evaluation.