1. It is the policy of Oakwood Healthcare to specify the mechanisms by which Observers are supervised by members of the Medical Staff. This policy provides guidelines to attending physicians, residents, medical students, and hospital personnel to ensure appropriate supervision is provided and documented when Observers participate in patient care. The management of each patient’s care is the responsibility of a member of the Medical Staff with clinical privileges.

2. This policy applies to all Observers irrespective of their level of training. Each Observer is required to fill out the appropriate application based on his/her level of training, which can be found on our website.

3. The existence of this policy creates no obligation for any program or department to provide such an experience.

4. An Observership is a voluntary experience that does not constitute medical education, graduate medical education, continuing medical education, or training leading to licensure or board certification. The Observer receives no academic credit for the Observership. The Observer is not a student, resident, medical staff member, or employee of Oakwood Healthcare System, and must not represent him/herself as such.

5. The Supervising Physician is directly responsible for the actions of the observer. Residents may also serve as Supervising Physicians for observers.

6. The Supervising Physician must supervise the Observer in the presence of patient(s) at all times. No Observer may have unrestricted access to any Oakwood affiliated site(s).

7. The Observer must obtain prior written authorization from the medical student coordinator. Failure to obtain written authorization will be grounds for immediate escort from the premises of any Oakwood affiliated site(s). The application process and respective forms are based on level of training, and will be available on our website.

8. Permissible activities for an Observer include: Participation in grand rounds, seminars, simulations, and other didactic activities; discussion of patient interactions with the Supervising Medical Staff or designee, observation of patient evaluation if patient permits prior to activity; and use of software and hardcopy educational resources (teaching software, books, journals) from Oakwood library and access to the internet from Library computers in accordance with Oakwood Healthcare System IT policies.

9. The Observer must wear appropriate identification at all times at Oakwood affiliated sites and abide by all policies, rules, regulations, and bylaws of Oakwood Healthcare System and Oakwood affiliated Medical Staff(s).

10. In the presence of a patient, the Observer or the supervising physician must introduce him/himself to the patient as an Observer and must request the patient’s permission to be present during a clinical visit, procedure, or other patient service. If the patient declines to allow the Observer’s presence, the Observer must leave the area. The Observer may not have direct Patient Contact.
11. The Observer must not make patient chart entries (electronic or hard copy) or copy patient charts (paper or electronic).

12. The Observer’s length of experience at any Oakwood affiliated site(s) will be based on the applicant’s original agreement with said program and no extensions will be made to original agreement.

13. If a visa holder, the Observer must comply with all terms of the visa during his/her Observership and failure to do so may result in immediate termination of the Observership. Please note currently Oakwood Healthcare System does not sponsor visas for residency.

14. Oakwood Healthcare System may, at its sole discretion, terminate an Observership without recourse or appeal process.

15. After receipt of all application documents, the designated medical student coordinator will determine whether the person is eligible for an Observership at an Oakwood affiliated site(s). If eligible the application and the checklist will be referred to the specific Program(s). No program is obligated to accept an Observer, and the Program may require further application documentation and/or an interview.

16. If the Program agrees to host an Observer, the Program must identify the person responsible for supervision of the Observer during the Observership and send written confirmation of the dates to the designated medical student coordinator.

17. All Observers will be provided information and attest to their understanding of this policy, and of HIPAA requirements. They will not be allowed to start Observership activities in the hospitals without first completing this and other documentation required by the Medical Education office.

18. It is expected that physicians involved in the education of Observers will:
   a) provide a model of appropriate and compassionate care;
   b) maintain an ethical approach to the care of patients;
   c) maintain a professional relationship with medical students at all times, which includes:
      • not exploiting the power differential that is inherent in the relationship;
      • not becoming involved in situations involving potential conflicts of interest;
      • not intimidating or harassing medical students emotionally, physically or sexually;
   d) maintain a professional relationship with all other colleagues, which includes not intimidating or harassing them emotionally, physically or sexually.

19. The Supervising Physician or their designated coordinator will attest to the successful completion of an Observership. Supervising physician is not necessarily obligated to write a letter of recommendation.

Observers and/or Supervising Physicians who fail to adhere to these policies are subject to having the Observership terminated immediately.