SERVICE EXCELLENCE STANDARDS  
GEISINGER DERMATOLOGY SERVICE LINE

All:

- Answer the telephone within four (4) rings.
- Use a standard greeting. EX: “Dermatology. _____ speaking. May I help you?”
- If the call is transferred, inform the caller of the transfer and identify with whom the caller will be speaking. Clarify what to do if the call has been disconnected. EX: Provide the Appointments toll-free number (800-275-6401) or the Department Secretary’s number (570-271-8050).
- For follow-up calls, be sure to let the caller know that you will do your best to have requests taken care of that day but, unfortunately, a late afternoon call might not see action until the following day. Assure the patient that follow-up is very important to us and to please notify us if their requests have not been taken care of in a timely fashion. **If an urgent call comes in, put the note in Epic AND notify the provider via pager.**
- End conversations with pleasant words. EX: “Thank you for calling and have a good day.”
- Introduce yourself with your name and title/position to patients and families. EX: “Good morning, Mrs. _____. My name is _____ and I’m your nurse.”
- Introduce any assistants (e.g. residents, nurses, med students) who will be involved with the patient. Ask the patient if it is ok for other people to come in the room, including the supervising Dr. No surprises for the patient.
- Always keep eye contact with the patient. Walk toward the patient when summoning them from the waiting area, and greet appropriately.
- Dress professionally. All staff will wear uncluttered name badges at eye level on their coats or jackets.
- All staff will ask the patient’s family name and will use that name throughout contact with the patient and family (e.g. use “Mrs. Johnson” rather than “Mary”). Use first names or nicknames only when the patient is a personal friend or requests to be addressed by a certain name.
- When discharging patients from the clinic, end the interaction with: “Is there anything else I can do for you?” And give them good directions out of the room. Acknowledge when you will next see the patient and thank them for coming in. **Make the best last impression.**
- When possible, staff will personally escort patients and family to a destination, especially when conveyance is not available. If staff encounters someone who is lost or confused, do your best to escort that person to their destination.
- If entering a room where an examination is in progress, knock gently, crack the door, identify yourself, and await permission to enter. Acknowledge the patient and indicate to them that you are sorry for the interruption. If spouse or relative are requesting to come into the room, have them wait at the nursing desk and ask the patient for permission before escorting them to the room.
- Avoid loud conversations and excessive levity in the hallways and when talking at the nurses station or MOHS lab, front desk and in front of secretaries in the back. Be certain you are out of hearing range when discussing patients. Issues of treatment, examination, billing, or other private matters should be discussed well out of earshot. **Never** use a patient’s name when consulting in hallways.
Accept responsibility for neatness and lack of clutter in work areas and offices. Avoid gum chewing, drinking, or eating in front of patients.

Greet fellow employees. Assume responsibility for your job and assist other employees with their job responsibilities when time permits. Be responsible for one another.

Work as a team and encourage co-workers by your actions to strive to attain standards for service excellence.

Always feel free and open to make suggestions so Dermatology can better meet patient and family needs.

**Secretaries/Receptionists:**

- Use a prepared, standardized phone response to common questions. Questions and answers may be printed on cards. Members of the department will identify responses.
- Do not answer the telephone and immediately place the caller on hold. EX: “Dermatology is busy – can you hold please?” **Wait for a response.** After the caller has been on hold, respond “I am sorry to keep you waiting. This is _____ May I help you?” If the hold time is going to be longer than 30 seconds, offer to return the call rather than keeping the caller on hold.
- Greet and/or acknowledge the patient and family immediately upon arrival in the clinic. Tell the patient from which side of the clinic they will be called.

**Nursing:**

- Allow patients to remain in the reception area to avoid long waits in treatment rooms. If the patient is in a treatment room, ask them if it is alright to close the door while waiting to see the physician.
- Encourage patients to have full body skin examinations. “Would you like to have your skin checked while you are here? In order for the physician to do a thorough skin examination they prefer that you wear a gown. Would this be ok?” Demonstrate how the gown is worn. For example, “Mrs. Jones, the opening of the gown goes in the back. You may leave your undergarments on.”
- Ask the patient to “crack” the door when they are ready for the physician.
- If a patient is being seen for a mole check, ask them if they have had prior photos so they can be retrieved from the department file.
- Patients/families must be kept informed at least every 15 minutes while the patient waits in a treatment room. If the provider is behind, inform patients in the reception area of pending delays.
- Sensitive infectious disease information should be shared only with personnel who are in direct contact with the patient to allow for necessary precautions, including disposable instruments.

**Providers:**

- If sensitive examinations are in progress, the provider should apprise the patient that the examining room door will be locked to avoid intrusion.
- Staff should clearly explain procedures to patients and ask permission before carrying out procedures.
- Staff should give comprehensive, clear information on follow-up instructions to patients and family, both with printed material and verbal explanations.
- Call patients following surgery. Call patients with laboratory and biopsy results unless previously agreed that you will use MyG to inform. Document the call in Epic.
- Be sensitive to patients and conditions. Be careful about presuming judgment.