



How to raise concerns: a guide for VCU medical students in the clinical environment

Your experience at VCU is important to us. While we hope and expect that everything will go well, we understand that sometimes that is not the case. This document helps you navigate the process for raising concerns. Concerns can be grouped into patient care and non-patient care related issues. This document provides guidance and resources for where to go when you need help.

All emergencies, threats, immediate danger, or crimes must be reported without delay to the VCU police at (804) 828-1234 or 911.

Patient Care-Related Concerns

For patient care issues, you should use the following list to address any concerns or issues you have experienced or seen.

- Senior Resident
- Attending Physician
- Clerkship Director/Coordinator
- For urgent, unstable patients, consider activating the Rapid Response Team
- VCUHS only: Senior Physician on Call: pager 9452 or Telepage at (804) 828-0951

Patient Safety Event: Use the patient safety reporting system icon (“Safety Intelligence Event Report”) found on the VCUHS intranet home page.

HIPAA privacy and security violation or other privacy issues, lost or stolen devices containing personal health information, conflicts of interest, fraud, waste, abuse, or violation of ethical standards or the VCUHS Code of Conduct:

- Email VCUHS Compliance Services at complianceservices@vcuhealth.org
- Call the Helpline at 1-800-620-1438.

Disruptive patient or family member: Discuss with health care team (e.g. resident/attending, bedside nurse, nurse manager) and, if needed, the VCUHS clinical administrator in house.

- Contact VCUHS Risk Management (804) 828-1707 (pager #6107) to help navigate the process; consider a patient care agreement for situations of serious conflict via VCUHS Intranet Risk Management page.
- Activate the Behavioral Emergency Response Team by hitting #500 on a local phone line.

Disclosure of adverse events, questions about informed consent, informed refusal, end of life concerns, judicial consents, and patient termination:

- Discuss the situation and options with your resident/attending.
- As needed, contact VCUHS Risk Management at (804) 828-1707 (pager #6107) for additional insight and guidance.

Concerns Outside of Patient Care

As a general rule, use the below chain of command to address issues. If you feel the concern is significant and not adequately addressed or if your concern is related to a member in the chain of command, then move the issue further along the chain. You may also choose whomever you feel appropriate if you are concerned about retaliation.



- Supervising resident
- Chief Resident
- Attending physician
- Clerkship Director/Coordinator
- Assistant Dean for Clinical Medical Education; Associate Deans for Student Affairs
- Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education and Student Affairs
- Dean of the School of Medicine

Unprofessional Behaviors or Mistreatment Experiences

If further unresolved concerns after discussions with the above individuals, or if you are interested in alternative options, the following resources can be utilized:

Inappropriate behaviors, sexual misconduct, sexual or other forms of harassment, gender, racial or other forms of discrimination, or retaliation can be reported to:

- **VCU Equity and Access Services (including the Title IX officer)** at (804) 828-1347 or at: <https://equity.vcu.edu/>
- **Reporting Anonymously:** You can call the confidential VCUHS Compliance Helpline toll free: 1-800-620-1438
- **VCU Lifebuoy:** Division of Student Affairs Safety and Support online reporting: <https://dos.vcu.edu/safety/>
- Anonymous Office of Medical Education hotline: leave an anonymous voicemail; messages retrieved at least weekly **804-827-TALK (8255)**

Personal Health:

- **Personal/Physical Health:** Contact your primary care physician or University Student Health Services: 804-828-8828
- **Mental Health:** Contact University Counseling Services: 804-828-6200
- **Suicide Prevention:**
 - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255; Crisis Text Line: Text TALK to 741741
 - Virginia Department of Health Suicide Prevention website: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/suicide-prevention/>

Creating and maintaining a professional learning environment depends on raising concerns when our standards are not met. Thank you in advance for drawing attention to any concerns.