



## THE JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE

# Foundational Behaviors for All Team Members

Leading the Augusta Health Way

“While we aspire to reach the highest levels of patient satisfaction and receive national recognition as a top healthcare system, our motivations are pure: Providing a superlative patient experience is the right thing to do for our patients and families, and for each other.”

- 3 . Value-Based Behaviors
- 4 . . . . . What is My Role?
- 5 . . . . . Terminology and Always Words
- 6 . Patient & Community-Centeredness
- 7 . . . . . Professionalism
- 8 . . . . . Excellence
- 9 . . . . . Teamwork
- 10 . . . . . Defining Moments
- 11 . . . . . Talking Points

# My Augusta Health Commitment

## CORE VALUES

I will reaffirm and strengthen the character of our organization through four core values:

- Patient & Community-Centeredness
- Excellence
- Professionalism
- Teamwork

## DEFINING MOMENTS

Defining Moments are behaviors that, if routinely enacted, will help to make Augusta Health the employer and provider of choice. These Defining Moments are written in the form of a promise (“I will...”) to our patients, families, visitors, and one another. I will:

- Walk with patients, family members, and visitors to their destination.
- Be present.
- Treat every team member, regardless of their role, as a valued and beloved customer.
- Take accountability for both successes and failures.
- Take pride in my professional appearance, language, and behavior.
- Participate in ongoing learning opportunities.
- Play an active role in decisions that affect my work.
- Manage-up/talk-up my colleagues and other teams.

I commit to demonstrating the behavioral expectations outlined above in all my interactions.

The culture and attitude of Augusta Health will be better because I work here.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Through the work of frontline team members, leaders, volunteers, medical staff, and board members, we have developed clear and concise information on a set of behaviors required for us to truly live the Augusta Health values. As we continue to put these defining moments into practice, you will see our culture becoming richer.

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We will know we are successful when:



### TEAM MEMBERS

- Feel welcomed and safe
- Know that their unique background and experiences are valued
- Are included in decisions that affect their work
- Promote Augusta Health as the best place to work and receive care



### LEADERSHIP

- Role-models expected behaviors
- Is proud to be a part of a culture where we lead with our values
- Fosters environments for accountable and inclusive teamwork



### PATIENTS, FAMILIES, AND VISITORS

- Feel welcomed and safe
- Know they are cared for as individuals
- Make Augusta Health the first choice for all their healthcare needs

At its essence, the “Augusta Health Way” is about building trust and peace of mind.

# What is my role?



## KNOW

Augusta Health has embarked on a transformational journey to define and reinvigorate a culture that fosters a superior patient experience. As a part of the foundational resources, you will see terminology changes, specific behaviors, testimonials, and follow-up activities to personalize the conversation and keep it alive. This document is purposefully entitled “The Journey to Excellence: Foundational Behaviors for All Team Members” to demonstrate how the success of our organization depends on you and me—regardless of our level or title/role—and our collective ability to lead.



## SHARE

- Values-based behaviors
- Terminology changes
- Team member testimonials (visit the “Augusta Health Way” link on Pulse)
- Next steps and strategies for sustainment



## DO

Ask yourself: Am I behaving in a way that “builds trust and peace of mind”?

- Recognize colleagues for demonstrating Augusta Health’s values
- Lead activities from the “Follow-up for Success” booklet to foster team engagement
- Make purposeful connections to supporting process (e.g., onboarding new hires), team member engagement, and continuous improvement

One small but meaningful way that we demonstrate our Values is through our **language**.

Important Terminology		
Former Term	New term	Rationale
Staff/Employee	Team Member	A purposeful shift to stress the importance of inclusiveness and collegiality. Healthcare is a “team sport” and it’s the team members of Augusta Health that differentiate us on the “playing field.”
Staff Education	Organizational & Talent Development	A term more fitting for the team that helps to guide and support the strategic direction of our culture - the Augusta Health Way - through education, programmatic change, and initiatives designed to foster team member engagement.

Always Words	
In the most difficult situations, these statements demonstrate empathy and a desire to serve others.	
Instead of:	Say this:
“I don’t know”	“I will gladly find the answer for you. Do you have (estimated time)?”
“That’s not my job”	“Please allow me to find someone who can better assist you.”
“I can’t help you; It’s against our policy/procedure; I don’t have time; I lack the resources;” etc.	“Yes, let me see what I can do.” (As long as the request is not illegal, unethical, or immoral).
“Team member and/or Department messed up.”	“I’m sorry that happened to you.” proceed to manage-up the Team member/Department and resolve the concern.

# Patient & Community-Centeredness

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Each value has a set of ten behaviors that collectively define the Augusta Health Way. Within each value, there are two Defining Moments.

It is also important that we define our values through specific, repeatable behaviors... the way that we build trust and peace of mind.

We believe that the patient is at the center of all that we do and the sole reason we exist. We recognize that the patient is an integral member of a family, and the family is part of our community. For these reasons, we must always prioritize our services and clinical care in the interest of being patient, family, and community-centered. Ease of access and availability of services are important, but so is providing a warm and compassionate environment.

- **Defining Moment: I will walk patients, family members, and visitors to their destination** rather than pointing or attempting to provide verbal directions. Before leaving, I will ask, “Is there anything else I can do to assist you?”
- **Defining Moment: I will treat every team member, regardless of their role, as a valued and beloved customer.**
- Consistently practice “Elevator Etiquette.” Take the time to make a personal connection by talking about something that is important to the patient/customer (e.g., sports, upcoming events), step off the elevator to allow assisted patients to ride first, and hold the door for others.
- Always guard the patient’s privacy, and do not talk about patients outside of the hospital or in inappropriate areas (e.g., the Café).
- Listen for understanding. Ask the patient/customer to repeat back key information to ensure alignment and check for additional needs.
- Fully describe what you are doing and why you are doing it, and explain what to expect next.
- Use plain terms that our patients and visitors can understand; avoid jargon or technical terms.
- Ask patients or customers for their goals, how they would like to receive care and communication, etc.
- Always conclude every patient or internal customer interaction by asking if there is anything else you can do to assist them.
- Thank the patient/customer for choosing Augusta Health as their healthcare provider of choice.

# Professionalism

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We highly value our team members, medical staff, and volunteers, and we consider us all as healthcare professionals, regardless of our roles in the healthcare system. Therefore, we believe our conduct, ethics, and behaviors must reflect integrity at all times. To this end, we pledge to stay current with education and do our jobs as best we can, ensuring competency in our dealings with patients, one another, and the community at all times.

- **Defining Moment: I will take pride in my professional appearance, language, and behavior.** I will always wear a clean uniform or attire and a forward-facing ID badge above the waist.
- **Defining Moment: I will be present.** If necessary, I'll take time to process what previously happened (or what I expected to happen) in order to focus on the here and now. This includes the use of electronic devices in hallways and meetings.
- Make eye contact and warmly smile to acknowledge every person within ten feet; at five feet also provide a sincere greeting.
- Always introduce yourself (including when answering the phone) by stating your name, your role in the organization, and the unit/department in a positive and helpful tone of voice.
- Set specific dates/times for agreements and follow-up to provide progress, delays, changes to original commitments—avoid “fuzzy” promises like, “I’ll be back shortly.”
- Explain decisions and rationale, including any relevant background information.
- Proactively approach conflict as an opportunity to expand knowledge and experience.
- Use resources responsibly and to the benefit of Augusta Health.
- Come to meetings prepared and on time. If you need to be late or leave early, inform the facilitator in advance.
- Assess routine processes regularly to determine if there are opportunities for improvement.



# Excellence

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We believe that as a healthcare system, our performance standards must be at the highest levels at all times; therefore, we commit to excellence in all that we do. We recognize that aspiring to excellence is a journey that requires constant innovation and openness to change. We know that education is core to promoting excellence and that ongoing learning is essential for all healthcare professionals. Finally, our commitment to excellence is inspired by our strongly held beliefs in clinical quality and safe patient care.

- **Defining Moment: I will take accountability for both successes and failures.**
- **Defining Moment: I will participate in ongoing learning opportunities** (Town Hall meetings, webinars, etc.).
- Use evidence-based practices to improve outcomes and establish standards.
- Talk to the individual(s) involved, not about them behind their backs. If there is a need to vent or seek counsel, ensure that you do it in a balanced and respectful way.
- Recognize and celebrate the accomplishments and important milestones of your co-workers.
- Represent Augusta Health in a positive manner outside the organization and in the community.
- Proactively seek opinions of all affected parties. Look for diversity in background, tenure, and experience.
- Establish effective systems of measurement to track progress and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Actively seek to remove barriers for others so they can focus on their essential tasks.
- Openly share mistakes and the lessons learned to avoid future recurrence and help all team members in the department perform at their best.





# Teamwork

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The strength of Augusta Health is based on our commitment to teamwork. We have the greatest success in fulfilling our mission and serving our community when we work together and acknowledge our collective stake in our successes and failures. When we work together we are capable of reaching the highest levels of performance and producing the best possible health outcomes for, and service to, our community.



- **Defining Moment: I will play an active role in decisions that affect my work** (e.g., by participating in team meetings or patient/culture surveys).
- **Defining Moment: I will manage-up/talk-up my colleagues and other teams by sharing positive facts, characteristics, stories, etc., with patients and customers** (e.g., “Pam has more than 20 years of experience as an ICU Nurse. You’re in good hands, Mr. Jones.”).
- Improve communications among team members by using various channels (meetings, huddles, focus groups, 1:1 dialogue, etc.). Come prepared so the discussion will be effective and valuable for all.
- Take the time to mentor or coach colleagues in the moment.
- Have your team member’s/leader’s back. Assume positive intent and refrain from passing blame or judgment on others for perceived shortcomings.
- Always say “yes” to a team member’s request for help. Your role can be negotiated, but the decision to help cannot.
- Engage peers and others in conversation about their interests, skills, and aspirations. Take action to create mutually beneficial goals for the individual(s) and the organization.
- Regularly solicit feedback about your own performance and treat constructive comments as an opportunity to learn. Share your findings/learnings with others.
- End conversations by clarifying roles and expectations—who is responsible, what are they responsible for, and by when will we follow up.
- Speak up when values and/or decisions do not match the desired outcome.

# Defining Moments

## I will...

- **walk with** patients, family members, and visitors to their destination.
- **treat every team member**, regardless of their role, as a valued and beloved customer.
- **take pride** in my professional appearance, language, and behavior.
- **be present.**
- **take accountability** for both successes and failures.
- **participate** in ongoing learning opportunities.
- **play an active role** in decisions that affect my work.
- **manage-up/talk-up** my colleagues and other teams.



# Talking Points/FAQs

Having a common set of talking points ensures that we deliver a consistent message to our patients, families, visitors, and each other. Please help us promote the transformational journey that we have embarked on together!

## Q: How does this connect to Patient Experience and Team Member Engagement?

A: Through intentional efforts to improve the employment experience, we believe that team members will be more likely to reciprocate with our patients, families, and visitors. In fact, studies show that a 1% increase in employee engagement translates to a 2% improvement in patient satisfaction.

## Q: What is my role? What can I do to demonstrate the Augusta Health values?

A: Your role is to understand and demonstrate the behaviors that support the “Augusta Health Way” in your interactions with co-workers, patients, families, and our visitors. You should also take time to make connections between the common set of behaviors outlined in this guide and those that occur on a day-to-day basis in your department.

## Q: How can I help to promote accountability for the expectations of the Augusta Health Way?

A: Regardless of your role or level in the organization, you should actively give positive feedback to your teammates in case of an issue/misunderstanding/undesirable outcome. Begin by seeking to understand what happened. Share your feedback in a balanced and fair way, and establish a mutual agreement as to who will do what, by when, and how you will follow up to ensure ongoing success.

## Q: How can I promote this change in the community?

A: Right or wrong, most people will make a connection between your behavior outside of the workplace and the level of professionalism, quality of care, etc., they can expect from your employer. That said, be mindful of how you represent the hospital—you are the “Augusta Health Way.” Refer to the Resource section to the right for additional ideas on how you can serve as an ambassador for the organization.

## Supporting Resources

### Recognition

Go to the “Augusta Health Way” link in Pulse to acknowledge/nominate team members.

- **Shining Star:** Acknowledge day-to-day accomplishments. Send an eCard to any team member, at any time.
- **Rock Star:** The highest honor in the organization. Nominate team members who consistently lead expectations.

## Support Partners

### Human Resources

CALL: 540-332-4700

EMAIL: HumanResources@AugustaHealth.com

### Process Improvement

EMAIL: SDLewis@AugustaHealth.com

### Member Assistance Program (MHN)

CANOPY

CALL: 1-800-433-2320

TEXT: 503-850-7721

EMAIL: info@canopywell.com

### Quality and Patient Safety

CALL: 540-332-4893 or

540-245-7319

EMAIL: patientrelations@augustahealth.com

### Compliance & Privacy

HOTLINE: 1-888-750-3230

EMAIL: ComplianceHotline@AugustaHealth.com



**Augusta Health Way**