

CENTER FOR HEALTH & WELLBEING  
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
POLICY & PROCEDURE

**Rights of Patients**  
**Treatment of a Minor**

**BACKGROUND**

By Vermont law, consent for medical or mental health treatment cannot be provided by individuals under 18 years of age. Consent for treatment for such an individual can only be granted by a parent or guardian unless an emergency situation necessitates immediate treatment and the parent or guardian is not immediately available. In addition:

- Minors who are married or have ever been married; minors on active U.S military duty; and minors emancipated by court order may give informed consent to their own health care.
- Minors of any age may provide their own informed consent for the termination of pregnancy, or to receive medical treatment necessary to obtain contraceptive devices and medications.
- Minors of any age may provide their own informed consent for medical treatment related to rape, incest, or sexual abuse. Health care providers are required to report such incidents to the Department of Children and Families within 24 hours.
- Minors 12 years of age and older may give informed consent for treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, drug dependence, and alcohol abuse. If a minor requires hospitalization for treatment of any of these conditions, the parents must be notified of the hospitalization.
- Minors 14 years of age and older may voluntarily admit themselves to a hospital for mental health care if they provide informed consent in writing. Minors under the age of 14 years may voluntarily admit themselves to a hospital for mental health treatment if they provide their own written informed consent and a written application from a parent or guardian.

**POLICY**

The Center for Health and Wellbeing follows the laws and statutes of the state of Vermont concerning the need to obtain consent for the care of students under the age of 18.

The Center for Health and Wellbeing's primary mission is the provision of medical and mental health care for students attending the University. Each year, a number of students matriculate at seventeen years of age or under. With the exceptions noted below, the Center for Health and Wellbeing will obtain consent for care for these individuals.

## PROCEDURES

- Electronic medical records for patients under the age of 18 are automatically identified as such in the electronic health record system with the word “PEDIATRIC” highlighted in a pink/magenta color on the appointment making pop-up dialogue box.
- Matriculating students under the age of 18 and their parents or guardians will receive written notification of the need to provide consent for mental health and medical care at the Center for Health and Wellbeing.
- Parents and guardians of these students will be invited to sign the Center’s consent to care document and return this form to the Center for Health and Wellbeing, where it will be incorporated into the student’s electronic medical record.
- If a student presents for care and there is no consent form on record, the student will be seen once for an evaluative visit for the purpose of insuring that the student’s issue(s) are fully understood by a clinician. At this visit, the clinician will provide information to the student about the need for parent/guardian consent prior to receiving care.
- This policy and permission forms will be available on the CHWB website, as well as at each place of service.
- CHWB will accept permission to be given in writing or verbally. Acceptable forms of permission include: 1. CHWB Consent Form, completed by parent/guardian or by CHWB staff member/verbal permission or 2. Other written letter from parent/guardian.
- When treating minors without parental permission, providers must document that the patient understands the nature and risk of proposed treatment and is capable of making an informed rational choice. Provider must consider age, ability, experience, education, maturity level, conduct and demeanor.