

# **MeritCare Health System Guest Internet Access Access Guidelines and Disclaimer**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

MeritCare Health System provides wireless access to the Internet as a free service to our patients and visitors. We make the Internet service available as a tool to do research, pass time and maintain communication while either in the hospital or visiting patients. Use of the Internet at any MeritCare Health System facility is a privilege, not a right.

The Internet is, in general, an unregulated medium of information and communication. MeritCare Health System does not monitor and has no control over the information provided through the Internet. Information on the Internet is not necessarily current, accurate, or complete. While much valuable information is available on the Internet, some may be considered obscene, offensive or harmful, especially to children. MeritCare Health System balances the desire for free access to varying sources of information with the need to avoid material that may be obscene, harmful to minors, or that violates community standards.

Users of MeritCare Health System Guest Internet Access agree to abide by MeritCare's Acceptable Use Policy. The policy is available from Guest Services or at <http://guestconnect.meritcare.com>.

## **II. FILTERING BY MERITCARE HEALTH SYSTEM**

MeritCare Health System has installed software that will limit access to some Internet materials. The software is used to block Internet sites that could be obscene, offensive, or inappropriate for minors. However, filtering software may not block all of this information. Filters cannot control or prevent access to all material that may be obscene, offensive, or inappropriate for children.

## **III. INTERNET ACCESS BY MINORS: RESTRICTIONS**

A minor child (a person under age 18) may not use a computer provided by MeritCare Health System unless a parent or authorized representative has given written consent for this access.

## **IV. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

MeritCare Health System strongly suggests that parents supervise their minor children's Internet sessions. Filtering software may not be able to filter all information that is inappropriate for minors, or all information that parents may consider unsuitable for their minor children. MeritCare staff will not be responsible for monitoring children's use of the Internet. It remains the responsibility of the parent or authorized representative to supervise, discuss, and regulate a child's use of the Internet. MeritCare also encourages parents to discuss the use of the Internet with their children in relation to their own family values and boundaries.

## **V. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF USER**

MeritCare requires patrons of its Guest Internet Access to use this resource in a responsible and lawful manner in order to keep their privileges intact. Violations may result in loss of library privileges or access. Unlawful activities will be referred to the appropriate legal authorities.

Users must:

- Use the Internet for cultural, educational and informational purposes only.
- Communicate by email only through existing email accounts. The library does not provide Internet e-mail accounts.
- Respect copyright laws by making only authorized copies of copyrighted materials.
- Follow established time limitations, recognizing that library computers are available for use by many customers.
- Avoid any unlawful or unethical activities on the Internet.
- Not send, receive or display inappropriate materials, whether text or graphics, which may reasonably be construed as obscene by local community standards.
- Not alter hardware or software.
- Not misrepresent the user's identity by access code, password or signature.
- Respect the privacy of others.

## **VI. DISCLAIMER**

MeritCare Health System is not responsible for any damages, direct or indirect, from a patron's use of MeritCare's Internet services. MeritCare shall not be liable for any consequences of the use of its Guest Internet service, whether by children or adult users.