

Procedural Options for Protection of a Vulnerable Patient

- Adult Protective Services
 - In many states, acts or omissions from a healthcare provider constitute abuse. Check with your state for specifics.
 - Confirm APS actually enters the critical care unit and was with the patient to assess the situation. A state agency must not conform to lawless arbitrary hospital policies.
- Hospital Patient Safety Line- Report Safety Violation
 - If cannot reach remotely, the hospital lobby will have a phone on the wall you can call and ask operator to transfer you to both Security and Hospital Patient Safety Line.
- Report to Risk Management of hospital (typically a small department of nurses).
- If extremely urgent, go to the hospital, stand out front, call the police, and ask them to do a wellness check. If the local police won't put on PPE and actually into the patient's room to check on the patient, call the deputy's supervisor. If still nothing, call the county Sherriff. Let them know you tried the local police, and have been refused but you have a grave concern about this patient and specify the precise reasons.
- Request an Ethics Conference through the hospital. If you are refused (or it's unable to be done on your terms), you have potential grounds to report the hospital to the Joint Commission (the accreditation agency of many hospitals).
- Who is the compliance officer at the hospital? File a compliance complaint.
- The Medical Practice Act in your state lists the codified duties of a Doctor. A Doctor has legal duties owed to the patient. The Medical Board investigates complaints.
- The Nurse Practice Act in your state lists the codified legal and ethical duties of a nurse. A nurse has legal duties owed to the patient. Violations can be reported to the state nursing license board for investigation.
- Why is the patient still in a critical care unit? Are critical care rates being billed?