MEDICAL STAFF
EKG Reading Panel Policy
March, 2012

Membership
The Panel consists of members of the Active Medical Staff at Swedish Medical Center. Panel size may be adjusted to maintain minimum reading standards.

Eligibility
1. Panel members will be in good standing on the Active Staff at the Hospital.
2. Prospective Panel members will provide documentation of interpretation of 150 EKGs during the previous two years for eligibility.
3. Panel members will complete instruction in the operation computer system at the Hospital.

Panel Operations
1. A schedule for providing time on a rotating basis for EKG interpretation to each Panel member will be established by Panel and published by the Cardiovascular Section of the Hospital (currently two members each week). Members of the Panel are responsible for interpreting EKGs during their assigned time period.
2. The panel members will agree to provide interpretation of EKGs performed during their assigned time period according to the following rules established by the Hospital and Panel:
   a) Turnaround times on all EKG over reads will be reviewed. A maximum of 24-hour turnaround time is expected of all EKG over reads from the panel members.
   b) A single reviewer will over read 10 EKGs per reading panel member. Discrepancies per physician will be tracked. Any significant deviation from the average will be reported.
   c) Panel members will enter their interpretations in a manner and form as established by the Panel and the Cardiovascular Section using the assigned interpretation code.
   d) The Panel member will notify the attending physician, covering physician, or the floor nursing staff members of abnormalities in rhythm or appearance that are deemed significant that have not been recognized by the computer interpretation. The Panel member is encouraged to document this notification on the interpretation.
3. The Cardiology section will select a chairperson to oversee the management of the Panel. The chairperson will serve as a liaison to the Hospital and coordinate quality assurance and improvement activities.
4. Cardiologists on the waiting list will receive first priority for the next open panel position.
5. Emergency Room Physicians will be responsible for reading their own EKGs and placing the interpretation in the hospital system due to the emergent nature of their EKG interpretations. ER will also undergo quality monitoring to ensure proper evaluation of EKGs.

Quality Improvement/Assurance
1. The Panel members agree to participate in quality management programs as they are developed by the Cardiovascular Section and the Panel chair.
2. Cardiology Section will also perform QA over reads of the Emergency Department by selecting 100 random studies from the prior twelve months.

3. Panel members will participate in the quality process through review of additional EKG tracings as requested by the chairperson or executive committee.

4. The Panel chair will review physicians who are identified as consistent outliers in the quality process. Such physicians may be asked to complete additional CME to improve their reading skills. If additional documentation of skills and requested quality improvement activities are not completed within 3 months of written notification of concern, the panel member will be deemed to have resigned from the Panel.
   a) The EKG Reading Panel will provide semi-annual quality reports to the QMEC. Any significant deviations noted will be sent on to Peer Review Committee.

5. The Panel chairperson will review any concerns regarding an individual interpretation. The concerns will be addressed as appropriate with the Panel member or referred via the appropriate medical staff members and quality programs.

**Hospital Expectations**

1. The Hospital will maintain the computer system and provide EKG tracings for interpretation on a timely basis.

2. The Hospital will provide the Panel members with the necessary information for billing of EKG’s interpreted by the Panel members.

**Amendments**

The Cardiology Section Chairman or panel chair may recommend changes to panel guidelines. If they approve, those items will be referred to the Medicine Department. Once approval has been obtained through the Medicine Department Committee, the items must be reviewed and approved by the Medical Executive Committee.