PURPOSE:
Recognizing that current and future staff members may have religious, ethical and/or cultural beliefs which could conflict with various aspects of patient care or patient treatment, and wishing to avoid negatively affecting patient care, RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH) has established this policy to protect the sincerely held staff members’ beliefs without jeopardizing patient care.

POLICY:
RWJBH will make a good faith effort to provide a reasonable accommodation(s) to any staff member(s) who has provided documentation of a religious, ethical and/or cultural belief conflict provided such accommodation does not jeopardize patient care services and/or treatment.

QUALIFICATIONS:  This policy applies to all RWJBH employees.

PROCEDURE:
1. Staff members may have religious, ethical and/or cultural beliefs which could conflict with certain aspects of patient care and patient treatment such as, but not limited to removal of a patient from life support, assisting in abortion, etc. For purposes of this policy, the staff members' religious, ethical and/or cultural beliefs applied to a specific aspect of patient care or patient treatment will be referred to as "treatment conflicts".

2. All staff members will be required to identify those "treatment conflicts" which they will not participate in because of sincerely held religious, ethical and/or cultural beliefs. Staff members will not be required to perform or participate in those areas of patient treatment referred to as "treatment conflicts" on the Staff Member Certification form.

3. New hires will receive education on the policy and will be required to complete the “Staff Member Certification of Religious, Ethical and/or Cultural Treatment Conflict” form as part of the new hire onboarding process.

4. Staff members must recognize the obligation of the health care facility to treat all of its patients irrespective of staff member "treatment conflicts". Treatment of patients cannot be negatively affected by the implementation of this policy.

5. Where staff members have identified "treatment conflicts" on the “Staff Member Certification of Religious, Ethical and/or Cultural Treatment Conflict” form, and where there are insufficient other employees who have not identified similar "treatment conflicts" in the department and on the shift involved, to the extent that patient treatment may be jeopardized or negatively affected in the
facilities sole discretion, then and in said event the facility may transfer the staff member or members who have identified "treatment conflicts" to other open positions for which the staff member is qualified.

6. Applicants for employment, who are offered a position, will be offered the position contingent on completing the “Staff Member Certification of Religious, Ethical and/or Cultural Treatment Conflict” form. If the applicant has "treatment conflicts" in the position applied for which will negatively affect patient care, the applicant will be offered another position for which the applicant is qualified if one exists where the applicant has no "treatment conflicts". If no other open position exists, the applicant's name will be carried on a preferential hire list for six (6) months to be offered a position in the future at any time a position becomes available for which the applicant is qualified provided the applicant has no "treatment conflicts" in the position.

7. In emergency situations when staff members have religious, ethical and/or cultural reasons to refuse to participate in or administer patient treatment and where there are insufficient numbers of staff members within the department on the shift involved administering the patient treatment so that patient care may be negatively impacted or jeopardized; the facility may temporarily reassign other qualified staff members from anywhere else in the facility to perform the patient treatment. In addition, the facility may call in “off duty” staff members to perform the necessary treatment.

8. Any staff member who does not complete the form in full and list all known treatment conflicts will be reviewed as not having any treatment conflicts.

9. Any staff member who has a change in their religious, ethical, and/or cultural beliefs must complete a new "Staff Member Certification of Religious, Ethical and/or Cultural Treatment Conflicts" form adding additional treatment conflicts and/or deleting those that are no longer applicable. In the absence of the submission of any amended or substitute certification form, the Health care facility will rely upon the staff member's original certification form.

10. Any staff member who falsifies the “Staff Member Certification of Religious, Ethical and/or Cultural Treatment Conflict" form or who fails to fully complete the form and list all treatment conflicts which the staff member will not perform or assist in performing because of religious, ethical and/or cultural beliefs, will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.
STAFF MEMBER CERTIFICATION OF RELIGIOUS, ETHICAL AND/OR CULTURAL TREATMENT CONFLICT

I, _____________________________, currently employed by, or contracted with RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH) as a(n) __________________ (position) in the ___________________________ department on the ________________ shift, request that I not be required to participate in or perform treatment in the following identified aspects of patient care and/or treatment (hereinafter referred to as "treatment conflicts") because to do so would conflict with my religious, ethical and/or cultural beliefs:

(List the treatment conflicts you cannot perform and the reason you cannot perform them.)

1. _____________________________________________________________________________

2. _____________________________________________________________________________

3. _____________________________________________________________________________

4. _____________________________________________________________________________

5. _____________________________________________________________________________

I certify that my current religious, ethical and/or cultural beliefs, as noted above, do not permit my participation in or performance of the above treatments. Should my beliefs change at a future date, I will amend this form or file a new certification in writing. I understand that if the facility cannot accommodate my beliefs without jeopardizing patient care, I may be transferred to another open position for which I am qualified. I acknowledge having on line access to the "Staff Member Religious, Ethical and/or Cultural Treatment Conflict" policy and have reviewed this policy in total. An opportunity was extended to me to answer any questions that I have concerning this policy.

________________________________________________    _________________________
Employee Signature          Date

ORIGINAL DATE:  10.01.2019
REVISED: