

# **Teaching Physician Guidelines for Surgical Procedures**

## **Minor Surgical Procedures:**

- Procedures that take only a few minutes (5 minutes or less) to complete (e.g. simple suture)
- In order to bill, the teaching physician must be present for the entire procedure
- Teaching physician or resident may document the teaching physician's presence for the entire procedure

## **High Risk and Complex Surgical Procedures (Including Endoscopic Operations):**

- In order to bill, the teaching physician must be present during all critical or key portions of the procedure and be immediately available to furnish services during the entire procedure or arrange for another qualified surgeon to be immediately available to assist with the procedure, if needed
- Teaching physician determines what are the critical or key portions of the procedure
- If the teaching physician is present for the entire procedure, either the teaching physician or the resident may document the teaching physician's presence for the entire procedure
- If the teaching physician is present only for the critical or key portions of the procedure, the TP must document his/her own presence and immediate availability or the immediate availability of another qualified surgeon

## **Endoscopy Procedures:**

- In order to bill, the teaching physician must be present during the entire viewing
- The entire viewing starts at the time of insertion of the endoscope and ends at the time of removal of the endoscope
- Viewing the entire procedure through a monitor in another room does not qualify
- Teaching physician or resident may document the teaching physician's presence for the entire procedure

## **Two Overlapping Surgeries:**

- In order to bill, the teaching physician must be present during the critical or key portions of both procedures
- Critical or key portions of each surgery may not take place at the same time
- When a teaching physician is not present during non-critical or non-key portions of a surgical procedure and is participating in the critical or key portions of another surgical procedure, he/she must arrange for another qualified surgeon to be immediately available to assist the uncovered resident should the need arise
- Teaching physician must document his/her presence during the critical or key portions of each surgery and specify the other qualified surgeon who was immediately available

## **Examples of Acceptable Presence Statements:**

### **Resident:**

- *Dr. Smith was present during the entire procedure.*
- *This entire procedure was performed under the personal supervision of Dr. Smith.*

### **Teaching Physician:**

- *I was personally present throughout the entire procedure.*
- *I was personally present during the key portions of this procedure and immediately available throughout the entire procedure.*
- *I was personally present during the key portions of this procedure. Doctor "Qualified Surgeon" was immediately available for the remainder of the procedure.*