PURPOSE

This policy is intended to establish a mechanism for granting practice privileges to the Physician Assistants (PAs) within the hospital setting.

SCOPE

This policy applies to PAs who are engaged in a professional collaborative practice with a member of St. Francis Medical Center.

TEXT:

A. Physician Assistant (PA) who are affiliated with a physician member of the medical staffs may apply for practice privileges under the terms of this policy:

   The PA shall not be permitted to provide direct patient care or document in the medical record unless practice privileges are granted by the Credentials Committee, the Medical Staff Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees.

   The applicant must be a Licensed PA professional who meets the requirements for licensure as a PA as established by the State Board of Medical Examiners New Jersey and certification by the National Commission on Certification of PAs. The PA assumes specified professional responsibilities within the authorized scope of practice, and is expected to comply with the Standards of Practice and Policies established by St. Francis Medical Center which are consistent with the New Jersey Medical Board guidelines.

B. **Description of Role:** The PA will have hospital privileges consistent with the needs of those patients with whom she/he is actively involved, as determined by the Credentials Committee, Medical Staff Executive Committee and Board of Trustees including:

   1. Assessment of the physical, developmental and psychosocial health status of patients which may include history taking, physical examination, initiation and interpretation of laboratory tests, initiation of other diagnostic tests as determined by joint protocol, communication with patient/family to facilitate data collection and the free exchange of ideas in order to arrive at mutually agreed upon concerns and acceptable solutions to actual or potential health problems.
2. Access to patient records through mechanisms consistent with the policies, procedures, and practices of the hospital.

3. Access to and communication with nurses, physicians, and other staff members involved in the patient care.

4. Evaluation of patients' need for immediate nursing intervention, consultation and other health team referrals.

5. Ordering of medications and devices in conformity with the provisions of the The State of New Jersey and jointly developed hospital protocols.

6. The joint protocols must be signed by both the PA and the physician, and be reviewed at least on an annual basis. Protocols must be reviewed and approved annually by the Supervising physician and appropriate Department Chair or Section Chief.

7. The scope of practice of the PA at St. Francis Medical Center is limited to the protocol guidelines.

C. **Appointment Process:**

1. To obtain an appointment as an PA with practice privileges at St. Francis Medical Center Hospital, the PA must have:
   a. A current license to practice as a professional in the state of New Jersey.
   b. Graduated from a duly accredited program designated to educate and prepare the PA.
   c. Completed a graduate level credit course in pharmacology from a duly accredited school.
   d. Successfully completed the highest level practice examination in the appropriate area of specialization.
   e. The appropriate education and/or experience to qualify for the privileges in the area of specialty requested.
   f. Completed an application for PA privileges at SFMC.
   g. Current Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) certification utilizing the most current guidelines published by the American Heart Association (AHA) standards.
   h. The ability to work effectively as a member of an interdisciplinary healthcare team.
   i. Appropriate joint protocols for prescribing/ordering medications and devices.
   j. Written proof of liability insurance coverage in the amount specified by the Board of Trustees.
   k. Provide proof of continuing medical education as required for re-licensure in the State of New Jersey.
2. The PA shall apply to the Medical Staff Office for practice privileges. Along with a written request and completed application, she/he must submit curriculum vitae, evidence of current license and certification, liability insurance coverage, evidence of current health status, three professional references, and protocols developed jointly with a supervising physician who is a member of the St. Francis Medical Center Medical Staff. References must be a professional who has supervised the applicant, a supervising physician and a PA peer who can comment on the applicant's personal and professional qualifications.

3. Following approval by the Chief Medical Officer/designee, appropriate Section Chief and/or Department Chairman, the Medical Staff Office shall forward the candidate's application to the Credentials Committee for review and endorsement. When this process is complete, the Credentials Committee will send their recommendations to the Medical Executive Committee. The Medical Executive Committee will send their review and recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The final decision will be rendered by the Board of Trustees.

4. The number of PAs per physician is limited to four.

5. If practice privileges are denied, the candidate may appeal in writing to the Medical Staff Office within ten days of the notification as per appeal process in the Medical Staff Bylaws.

6. No endorsement will be considered to be final without approval of the Credentials Committee, Medical Staff Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees.

7. The Medical Staff Office will report names of PAs granted privileges to all nursing units, the admitting office, Medical Records Department and clinical department.
D. **Practice Privilege Guidelines:**

1. At all times the employing or supervising physician will remain responsible for all acts of the PAs while at the hospital.

2. PAs do not have admitting privileges, may not obtain consents except for procedures they perform.

3. The PAs authorizes the order by signing his/her own name, with co-signature of Physician's name or designee.

4. The supervising physician or designee must be present onsite or readily available through electronic communication.

5. The charts and records of the patients treated by the PAs are periodically reviewed by the supervising physician and the PA.

6. PAs will report clinical concerns to the attending physician designated/or collaborating physician. All PAs shall have administrative accountability to the Chief Medical Officer or designee;

7. All PAs shall be responsible for complying with all policies and procedures of St. Francis Medical Center.

8. The packet for bi-annual reappointment shall include an updated application, documented evidence of current license and certification, professional liability insurance, completion of 50 contact hours of continuing education units (to include updates related to Pharmacology), statement of health status, and updated, signed joint protocols.

9. The continued exercise of privileges is contingent on continued demonstration of qualifications. The administration of St. Francis Medical Center reserves the right to suspend or revoke privileges for failure to comply with relevant professional standards, nursing division and hospital policies, or failure to work effectively as a member of the health care team.

Approved by:

___________________________________  __________________________________
Chief Nursing Officer  Chief Medical Officer