Why Are Hospital Relations with Police Important?

- Maintaining appropriate relations with police can enhance the safety of patients, staff, visitors, and the reputation of the facility and police department as trusted members of the community.
- Because healthcare providers and police have different roles and duties, providers must maintain a cooperative attitude toward law enforcement, while safeguarding their own rights and those of their patients.¹
- Having a clear policy or protocol in place to guide staff concerning law enforcement response to a hospital disturbance can avoid the risk of harm to patients, staff, and police/security.

Did You Ask?

- Has an individual been designated to act as a liaison with the local police department to establish and maintain open lines of communication and discuss issues of mutual concern?
- Does your organization have a policy to guide employees and contracted staff in responding to police requests for statements, affidavits, and the serving of search warrants concerning events occurring on hospital premises?
- Does your organization have a policy for disclosure of protected health information to police that reflects HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) privacy standards and state privacy law, if applicable?
- Does your organization have a policy in place to address the use of force and weapons on patients by hospital police and hospital security?