

## CONNECTICUT VALLEY HOSPITAL OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE MANUAL

<b>SECTION: I</b>	<b>PATIENT FOCUSED FUNCTIONS</b>
<b>CHAPTER: 2</b>	Provision of Care, Treatment, and Services (PC) Assessment Continuum of Care
<b>PROCEDURE: 2.48</b>	<b>Guidelines for Appropriate Fingernail Hygiene</b>
<b>REVISED:</b>	Reviewed 02/18
<b>Governing Body Approval:</b>	4/14/16 ( <i>New</i> ); 04/18

**PURPOSE:** To minimize the risk of infection transmission by nails.

Numerous studies validate the increased number of bacteria cultured from the fingertips of persons wearing artificial nails, both before and after hand washing. Outbreaks of infections have been traced to the artificial fingernails of healthcare workers. Long nails, both artificial and natural, harbor more microorganisms than short nails. Studies have also demonstrated that chipped nail polish may support the growth of organisms on the fingernails.

**SCOPE:** All clinical staff

### **POLICY:**

It is the policy of CVH that all staff strive to prevent the risk of unnecessary infection. Thus, CVH sets out guidelines regarding nail length, use of artificial nails or nail polish use as adopted from the APIC Hand Hygiene Task Force. MMWR.2002: 51(RR-16).

#### **I. Length of nails:**

- A. Fingernails should be kept clean, healthy, and short (1/4 inch or less beyond the tip of the finger) to ensure the safety of patients requiring assistance with activities, daily living (bathing, personal hygiene care, food preparation).
- B. Long fingernails may pose a hazard to patient safety when moving or positioning the patient.

#### **II. Artificial nails or extenders**

Artificial nails, extenders, or nail enhancements (decorations) shall not be worn by any person whose responsibilities include direct contact with patients.

#### **III. Nail Polish**

- A. If used, nail polish should not be chipped.

#### **IV. Employees shall be responsible for maintaining hand hygiene by adhering to specific infection prevention practices.**