PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide employees with possible courses of action or options they can consider using when confronted by an individual(s) who is actively holding a firearm.

POLICY:

It is the policy of SHS to provide and maintain a safe and secure environment for all persons entering the hospital's campus and off site facilities.

DEFINITIONS:

1. **Active Shooter**: An individual armed with a firearm(s) who moves about the hospital's campus with unrestricted access, shooting at people with lethal intent to shoot as many people as they encounter. (Remember an armed barricade subject may transition to become an active shooter. Although an active shooter may not start off as a hostage situation, it has the potential to develop into a hostage situation.)

2. **Firearm**: A combustible weapon that fires a projectile(s). Examples of a firearm are handguns, rifles and shotguns.

3. **Cover**: A location that will provide you with a level of protection from shots being fired in your direction. Examples of cover are behind brick or cement walls, automobiles, heavy furniture items, etc.

4. **Concealment**: A location that will provide you with the ability to hide your body from view but it will not protect you from shots being fired in your direction. Examples of concealment are behind room or cubicle partitions, outdoor hedges, drawn room or shower curtains, bed linens pulled over your body, under beds, etc.

5. **Code Silver**: The code used to designate an “Active Shooter” incident is currently taking place on the hospital campus.

**1.0 IMPORTANT INFORMATION YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ACTIVE SHOOTER INCIDENTS**

1.1 Active Shooter incidents are infrequent but they do happen.

1.2 These incidents usually include warning signs and/or behaviors of concern, (i.e. emotional health issues and/or prior incidents of workplace violence, etc.) exhibited by the shooter before the shooting incident takes place.

1.3 An Active Shooter is not interested in taking hostages. The Active Shooter’s intent is to shoot as many people as he encounters, but an active shooter could transition into a hostage situation.

1.4 These incidents usually involve someone who is or has been affiliated with the location where the shooting incident takes place.

1.5 These incidents can involve single shooters or multiple shooters.
1.6 Encounters could be at close range or from a distance.

1.7 Victims could be either targeted, selected at random or both.

1.8 Incidents could be a single room confrontation or mobile confrontations throughout the campus.

1.9 No two situations are alike.

1.10 The impact of the shooting incident upon employees and the hospital could be devastating for a long time after the incident.

1.11 Those individuals caught up in an Active Shooter incident must develop a mindset of self survival if they want to come out of the incident alive.

1.12 Research has shown in previous Active Shooter incidents that those individuals immediately involved in the incident are often the first line of defense for their own survival. This may require that person having to physically eliminate the shooter by him/herself before the police arrive.

1.13 Research has shown in previous Active Shooter incidents that often the intervention of those people immediately involved with neutralizing the lethal threat posed by the shooter prevented further injuries and deaths. This would involve overpowering the shooter to disarm him or even taking his life to save your own.

1.14 Many Active Shooter incidents are very short in duration and are over when the police arrive on the scene.

2.0 PROCEDURE

2.1 Employees in the Immediate Area of the Shooting Scene

Employees witnessing a shooting incident or those who are in close proximity of the immediate area of an Active Shooter incident must immediately get into a mindset of self survival. These employees should consider using the following courses of actions/options which can increase a person’s chances for survival:

2.1.1 **Figure Out:** Quickly assess what is taking place in and around you and quickly decide your next survival move. Make a continuous mental assessment to determine where the shots are coming from and what direction you need to go.

2.1.2 **Get Out:** If you can, get out of the immediate area around the shooter as fast as you can. Do not wait for approval from anyone. Leave all of your personal belongings behind. Once you are out of the immediate area of the shooting, select a spot of cover that will protect you from shots being fired in your direction. If necessary, evacuate patients and staff and go to a safe place away from the danger. Security will respond to assist with evacuation.
2.1.3 **Call Out:** Once you are safely out of the immediate area, do not assume that someone else has called the police. Call 911 on your cell phone. 911 can be reached by using a Spectralink Phone, and/or internal phone by first dialing a 9, then 911. Be persistent as the lines could be busy. Tell the police where you are and what you saw. You should next call the hospital’s internal Emergency Telephone Number, extension 1111 (MHE) or 8888 (DGH) and provide the hospital operators with the same information that you provided to the police. If you are at an offsite, it is important that you first call the police and when safe to do so, call the hospital operator so they can warn others of impending danger.

2.1.4 **Hide Out:** If you are not able to get out then you must find a safe place to hide out. Try to find a place of concealment and cover that will hide you from the shooter's view and protect you if the shooter fires in your direction (i.e., behind a heavy desk, large furniture item, filled file cabinet, etc.) Avoid places that trap you or those places that restrict your options for movement. As quickly and as quietly as possible, pass the word throughout your area for everyone to remain quiet and to secure themselves as best possible.

2.1.5 **Keep Out:** Now that you are out of the shooter’s sight you must keep the shooter out of your hiding place. Lock all doors and if possible barricade the door to keep the shooter out. Stay away from all locked and/or barricaded doors and windows and lay as flat on the floor as possible. Turn off all lights and close all window blinds. Turn off all radios, computers, pagers and anything else that makes noises that the shooter can hear. If you have a cell phone keep the cell phone on but turn the audible ringer off. Call 911 on your cell phone. 911 can be reached by using a Spectralink Phone, and/or internal phone by first dialing a 9, then 911. Inform the police of your observations and your location. Your telephone call must be done quietly without drawing the attention of the shooter to yourself and to your location. Be silent and listen. Do not leave your secured area until you hear the “All Clear” message on the overhead announcement paging system or unless you are instructed to leave your area by someone you recognize as a police officer.

2.1.6 **Spread Out:** If there are two or more people in the same place, everyone needs to spread out. Spreading out gives all involved people options in the event they need to take action if the shooter enters the area. Do not huddle together for moral support or for the false feeling of safety. It is easier for a shooter to shoot groups of people who are close together than it is for the shooter to shoot at those people that are spread around the room. Talk quietly among yourselves about what you will do if the shooter enters your hiding place. Know what you are going to do before the shooter enters. Everyone in the room should act as a team if the shooter enters your hiding place. **Remember to focus on survival.**
2.2 Call Received by Hospital's Telephone Operators

2.2.1 After receiving the call of an Active Shooter, the hospital's Telephone Operators will immediately place a call to 911. The hospital's Telephone Operators will provide as much information as possible about the incident to the police to include information about the Active Shooter, weapons if known, the last known location of the Active Shooter, the number of people injured and the extent of those injuries if known. The hospital's Telephone Operators will then immediately call Security and alert them that there is an Active Shooter on the campus.

2.2.2 The hospital's Telephone Operators will also attempt to keep the employee caller on the line and obtain as much updated information about the Active Shooter incident as possible.

2.2.3 Employees witnessing an active shooting incident should obtain and then provide to the hospital's Telephone Operators as much information as possible about the shooter(s) such as, identity of shooter if known, current or past employee if known, physical and clothing description of shooter(s), type of weapon(s), last known location and/or direction of travel.

2.2.4 The hospital's Telephone Operators will as quickly as possible make an overhead announcement of a “Code Silver”. This announcement must include the last known location of the Active Shooter and must be broadcasted via the overhead paging system at least three (3) times.

2.2.5 The SHS Security Department will contact the hospital's Telephone Operators when the Active Shooter incident is over. The Security Department will instruct the hospital's Telephone Operators when the “All Clear” overhead announcement can be made.

2.3 Other Areas of Shore Health System Not Initially Affected by the Active Shooter

2.3.1 Upon hearing the overhead page “Code Silver” announcement, employees in areas of the campus not yet affected will immediately begin to provide instructions to patients, visitors and coworkers to calmly enter those secure areas that have lockable doors or have doors that can be barricaded.

2.3.2 DO NOT GO NEAR THE PAGED LOCATION OR IMMEDIATE AREA.

2.3.3 Calm, clear and concise communication by our employees to others is absolutely essential to prevent panic and confusion.

2.3.4 Employees in areas not yet affected should follow the same safety and security guidelines listed earlier in Section 2.0 of this policy for those areas in close proximity to the initial shooting incident. These guidelines should be employed once they are safely behind closed and locked/barricaded doors.
2.3.5 Stay clear of all hallways, stairwells and elevators to avoid contact with the Active Shooter or responding police officers who are searching for the Active Shooter.

2.3.6 If you are in a hallway, stairwell or elevator at the time of the initial overhead page alert for a “Code Silver”, then secure yourself in the nearest secured area. Lock and/or barricade the door and stay away from the door and remain calm and quiet.

2.3.7 Remember, do not leave your secure area unless you hear the “All Clear” from the overhead paging system or unless you are instructed to leave your area by someone you recognize to be a police officer.

2.4 Security's Role During an Active Shooter Incident

2.4.1 Since Shore Health System Security Officers are not armed, when possible, responding Security Officers should take up a position of safety where they can safely observe and report via two-way radio to the Security Office particular information about the shooting incident, the Active Shooter(s) and any other pertinent information concerning the event.

2.4.2 Whenever possible, gain access to those individuals who are injured and notify the Security Supervisor/ Manager of the number of victims and nature of their injuries.

2.4.3 If possible, move injured persons to a safer and more secure location so that they can receive medical attention as quickly as possible.

2.4.4 Whenever possible, evacuate all non-injured persons to a safer and more secure location.

2.4.4.1 Once these individuals have been safely evacuated, they must be identified and debriefed about what they witnessed.

2.4.4.2 These individuals will need to be interviewed by the police after the shooting incident has ended and the area secured.

2.4.5 Ensure that 911 has been called and that the police are responding to the hospital campus.

2.4.6 Ensure that a Code Silver has been announced three (3) times by the operator.

2.4.7 Contact all on-call personnel and the security manager and brief them.

2.4.8 If the Code Silver is at an off-site facility, security must contact the police to ascertain what assistance is needed. Security should not respond to the off-site unless requested by the police.

2.4.9 Security staff will attempt to isolate the Active Shooter(s) on the CCTV cameras and monitor the movement and actions of the shooter(s).
2.4.10 Security staff will attempt to identify the open card readers in the shooter’s immediate area and lock down those electronic card readers in an attempt to restrict the shooter’s freedom of movement.

2.4.11 Recognize that the responding police officers are in charge of this Active Shooter incident and the Security Department staff will take their directions from the police officers.

2.4.12 The Security Department staff will provide to the police officers any and all cooperation as is needed or requested by the police officers.

2.4.13 Once the responding police officers have advised that the “Active Shooter” incident is over and that the campus is now safe, the Security Department will ensure that the hospital’s Telephone Operators are notified and that an “All Clear” overhead announcement is made on the hospital’s paging system.

2.4.14 At the conclusion of an Active Shooter incident, the Security Officer shall create a Code Silver Debriefing Report which will be forwarded to the security manager and director of safety and security.

2.5 Facts to Remember Regarding Law Enforcement Response During and After Incident

2.5.1 When the first responding police officers arrive on the scene of an Active Shooter incident, they are not focused on helping people get out of the building nor are they focused on helping the injured. These first responding police officers are focused on identifying the threat. In other words, they are intent on identifying who is doing the shooting.

2.5.2 These first responding police officers are next focused on locating the shooter(s). They will be searching the immediate area in anticipation of an armed confrontation with the shooter(s).

2.5.3 These same first responding police officers will, once locating the shooter(s) focus on doing everything they can to eliminate the threat.

2.5.4 Employees who find themselves involved in an Active Shooter incident will be understandably very frightened. When an employee first sees a police officer, the employee will be greatly relieved and happy. The employee’s first response might be to quickly stand up, yell or want to hug or point at the police officer. THIS IS VERY DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR. Employees should never make quick movements. The police officer could become surprised or startled by the employee’s actions and it could result in the police officer shooting at what he/she perceives as a threat.

2.5.5 Employees should expect the police officers to point their weapons at them until the police officers are confident that the employee does not pose a threat to them. At this point everyone is considered a suspect.
2.5.6 When confronted by a police officer, employees should always show the officer that their hands are empty. Palms should be facing towards the police officer so that it can be easily seen that the employee is not holding a weapon.

2.5.7 Employees in the immediate area of the shooting incident should expect to be searched and even handcuffed by the police officers. Everyone is considered a threat until verified otherwise.

2.5.8 Employees should follow every order or instruction given to them by a police officer.

2.5.9 Once the employee has been removed from the area by the police officers, their identity will be verified and they will be debriefed by the police.

2.5.10 The areas involved in the Active Shooter incident are considered portions of a crime scene. As such, the police will be in total control of these areas. Once all of the injured persons have been safely removed from the areas and sent for medical treatment, the police will be in total control of the areas involved until the police are satisfied that their investigation and their evidence collection are complete. The police will inform the Security Department when the “All Clear” overhead page can be made. The Security Department will ensure that the hospital’s Telephone Operators have been notified and the “All Clear” will be made.

2.5.11 Once the police have completed their crime scene investigation they will relinquish control of those areas involved in the shooting back to the hospital.

2.6 Preventing an Active Shooter incident from occurring in the first place is the preferred course of action. Employees are strongly encouraged to report any threats, unusual actions or violent acts by a disgruntled or aggrieved employee or former employee against coworkers or supervisors. Any action that may threaten the safety of an employee, impact an employee’s physical and/or psychological well-being or cause damage to company property are behaviors of concern and should be reported to management without delay.

Gerard M. Walsh, Chief Operating Officer

Effective 02/11
Submitted by Gary Poole, Director
Safety and Security