



Vice President and Chief Executive Officer of the Medical Center

MEDICAL CENTER POLICY NO. 0253

- A. SUBJECT: Verification for Release of Patient Information
- B. EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2012 (Rvd)
- C. POLICY:

If the identity and authority of a person requesting information about a patient are not known, staff shall apply best common practice safeguards in verifying the identity of persons requesting information about patients. The verification procedures set out below are consistent with the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements.¹

D. PROCEDURES:

1. Verification Information

To verify a person's identity as the patient or as a family member or friend involved in the patient's care, staff shall first obtain the following information from the person making the inquiry:

- a. Patient's first and last name, plus
- b. Patient's home address, plus
- c. One of the following items: date of birth, medical record number or any other appropriate identifier, if applicable.
- d. For CarePartner program participants, the patient's first and last name and, CarePartner security code² must be provided for verification.

2. Outpatient Appointments

Staff may provide the time and location of a patient's outpatient appointment to help the patient with travel arrangements or other care coordination. Additional verification is required before

¹ This Policy does not apply to the release of directory information on inpatient location in the Medical Center. Such disclosure is governed by [Medical Center Policy No. 0150, "Requests for Restriction of Patient Information"](#).

² Upon admission, the patient's Care Partner, if one is identified, is provided a security code which is the last 4 digits of the account number.

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providing information about appointments in OB/GYN and Infectious Disease clinics. Staff receiving inquires about these clinic appointments shall verify the caller's identity by requesting items D.1.a. and D.1.b. and two of the items in D.1.c. above.

Inquiries from callers who cannot provide this verification information shall be relayed to the clinics, whose staff will seek agreement from the patient before releasing information to the caller.

Operators /Patient Information staff who receive telephone call requests for specific information regarding when a patient may be picked up after an outpatient appointment shall call the clinic, whose staff will check with patients about their desire to release this information.

3. Speaking with Family Members or Friends

Healthcare providers may speak with family members and friends of a patient about the patient's condition, beyond directory information (name and location), if the patient has indicated that this is permissible. If the patient is not present to be consulted or is incapacitated, providers may, if they determine it is in the patient's best interest, give family members and friends involved in the patient's care information that is directly relevant to their involvement.

4. Medical Records Requests from Patient, Family or Friends

Copies of the medical record may be provided to the patient or to an authorized representative as described in [Medical Center Policy No. 0092, "Release of Patients' Protected Health Information"](#).

5. Billing Information Requests

Patients seeking to discuss a bill shall be asked to provide verification information as in section D.1 above. Family members or friends seeking to discuss a patient's bill on the patient's behalf shall verify their identities and involvement in the patient's care as specified in section D.1 above. After completing verification, the account representative may discuss the bill amount, dates of service, and related third party payments. Additional information and copies of itemized bills may be given to the patient's authorized representative as described in [Medical Center Policy No. 0092, "Release of Patients' Protected Health Information"](#), either in person or via mail addressed to the patient at the patient's address. The account representative may verify the caller's status as an authorized representative by contacting Health Information Services.

6. Physician Inquiries

When an outside physician's office calls for information about a patient, staff members shall take reasonable steps to verify the physician's role in the patient's care, such as asking for the patient's name, address, and date of birth or by making a call back. Written requests from physicians' offices shall be on office letterhead and contain sufficient information about the patient to verify the physician's role in the patient's care. Written requests for the entire medical record shall be forwarded to Health Information Services.

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7. Inquiries from Government Agencies or Government Officials

Requests from government agencies for information about patients shall be directed to Health Information Services. Requests from individual government officials for information about patients may be directed to Health Information Services or as otherwise provided in [Medical Center Policy No. 0070 "Patient Concerns and Grievances"](#), as applicable.

8. Law Enforcement

Calls from law enforcement regarding more than directory information about a patient, shall be forwarded to the Medical Center Office of Patient Safety and Risk Management.

SIGNATURE:



R. Edward Howell, CEO, UVA Medical Center

9/26/12

DATE:

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Approved September 2003
Revised September 2006, September 2009
Reviewed September 2012
Approved by (Interim) Chief Technology and Health Information Officer
Approved by Medical Center Administration