

**EXTENDED CARE CLINICAL
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS**

Health Information Management Services Department

Procedure: Release/Disclosure of Resident Records

Date: June, 2011
REVISED (6/16/11)

- **General Description:** To assure uniform, consistent processing of outside party requests for resident record information, identifying the sources for Health Information Management staff guidance.

Procedural Steps:

1. HIM staff will **immediately** notify their respective facility **administrator** of any requests involving the **coroner, subpoena, an attorney, or resident or their authorized legal proxy** (family) for which there is a suspicion that a possible legal action involving the facility is being contemplated. The administrator will telephone Legal Counsel for guidance as to how to proceed and will then provide specific instructions to the HIM staff as a result of Legal Counsel directions.
2. Any further HIM staff duties should be completed exactly as directed by the facility administrator as a result of consultation with the Legal Counsel in Evanston. Likely duties **will depend on the nature of the information stored for the involved request (i.e. electronic (Matrix record); hybrid (Matrix information/documents plus some hard-copy documents; paper (all hard-copy documents):**
 - **Electronic (Matrix Record):** At the direction of Legal Counsel, the Medical Paralegal will copy all information from Matrix, burning a CD of the information to be disclosed. **If additional information to fulfill the full scope of the request is NOT available on Matrix, the Medical Paralegal will consult with the facility HIM staff as to WHAT is needed and HOW the information is to be handled** (i.e. locate admission or financial file(s) and route to Evanston);
 - **Hybrid Record:** At the direction of Legal Counsel, the Medical Paralegal will copy the segment of information available in Matrix and **will consult with the facility HIM staff as to WHAT further information is needed and HOW the information is to be handled;**
 - **Paper Record:** HIM staff can then begin to copy the records requested, since the records will usually have to be disclosed after Legal Counsel notification, documenting compliance with the procedural steps to follow on the **“Release of Resident Record Procedure Compliance Documentation Form” attached:**
 - A. Arrange the record in chronological order, remembering to incorporate the pull-forward packet in the body of the entire record in chronological order (i.e. all nurses notes should be sent in order from the time the resident enters the facility until discharge).

- B. During the process of arranging the record in chronological order, HIM staff should identify any case-specific documents that are **absent** (i.e. months for which continuing care sheets are not present).
 - C. HIM staff will conduct a reasonable search for the **absent** documents before beginning copy preparation.
 - D. Because the Medical Paralegal should be advised of the conduct of a search and be provided with a **list of any documents which were still unable to be found after all possible locations and sources have been exhausted**, a list of **documents unable to be located should be made and sent with the materials**.
 - E. Copy the record, count the number of pages in the prepared copy, and **make another copy of the request documents to send with the prepared record** (even if the request was previously faxed), placing the request copy at the top of the prepared copy of the clinical record. (**NOTE** – if the requestor has provided a check to defray costs associated with the request, **copy the check AND include with the information being sent to Evanston; give the original check to the facility to deposit**).
 - F. Retrieve **BOTH** the financial file and the admission file for the resident involved in the request and place these folders in a separate, labeled envelope.
 - G. Send the **COMPLETE** copy of request documents, now containing the original request documents as the cover sheet(s), the separate envelope containing the financial and admission files and the clinical record copies to the Evanston office **via the courier**. (**NOTE** – Evanston staff will record the date/time that the courier delivers the routed package.)
 - H. Charges for copies associated with Legal/Risk Management requests will be billed by the Medical Paralegal, unless she specifically directs the HIM staff member to do so.
3. For **ALL OTHER TYPES OF REQUESTS (i.e. non-Legal/Risk Management)**, guidance and support will be provided by the HIM Consultant (708 243-0502.)