

## Medical Record and Billing Release<sup>1</sup>

### **POLICY:**

All information contained within a patient's medical record or as accessed via computerized systems will be maintained in a confidential manner to protect the patient's right to confidentiality and comply with City, State and Federal Regulations including HIPAA.

Hart to Heart shall honor a patient's request to send medical information to an attorney; to an insurance company and/ or to the patient . Fees for medical records may apply

Protected Health Information (PHI) may only be *accessed/released* (disclosed) as follows:

- to those directly involved in the care of the patient;
- for the protection of public health as provided by law;
- for the payment of services as authorized by the patient;
- to assist researchers as authorized by the patient or other legally authorized individuals;
- or for any other purposes authorized/or required by law;
- or authorized by the patient or other legally authorized individual/or entity.

Protected health information may be disclosed with the authorization of the patient if:

- The authorization is in writing, is dated, and is signed or otherwise authenticated;
- The authorization specifies the information to be disclosed;
- The authorization specifies the entity or location to disclose the information; and
- The authorization specifies the person or persons to receive the information.

### **PROCEDURES:**

1. **The following procedures apply to the release of information process:**
  - Patients or designated individuals requesting access to their medical information shall complete an Authorization to Release Medical Information form.
  - The signature on the authorization must be that of the patient or legal representative (e.g. executor/executrix) if the patient is deceased, or of the legal guardian if the patient is a minor or has been declared incompetent.
  - The date on the authorization must be no more than one year old.
  - Medical records will be copied and forwarded within 10 business days of receipt of a written request for such information.
2. **Attorneys, Insurance Companies, Third Party Payors**  
Upon presentation of proper authorization from the patient, a parent or guardian, or the executor of the estate of a deceased patient; attorneys, third party payors, and others having legitimate interest in the medical record of patient may have information from the record.
3. **Law Enforcement Agencies**  
Members of any federal, state, or local law enforcement agency, authorized regulatory agency or bureau requesting medical information in the absence of proper documentation must be referred to Human Resources
4. **Subpoenas for Medical Records**  
Any department or healthcare provider receiving a subpoena for medical records must forward it to Human Resources for review and approval prior to processing the request.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from <http://www.cumc.columbia.edu/hipaa/policies/authorization.html>