

CHAPTER 40

Release of Health Information: Drug/Substance Abuse

I. POLICY

Health Record Services (HRS) staff shall document disclosure of patient information related to sensitive drug and substance abuse information in accordance with statutory guidelines which provide guidance for the release of sensitive drug and substance abuse information.

HRS staff shall disclose drug and substance abuse information only upon receipt of a properly executed, written, dated, and signed patient authorization for EACH disclosure. Drug and substance abuse information shall be released only on an authorization, which specifically permits release of such information. These safeguards have been established to ensure patients that this information will remain strictly confidential, in order that patients feel free to disclose all information to the health care provider.

II. PROCEDURE

- A. Health care staff shall use the "Authorization for Release of Health Care Record" form to release any patient identifiable drug or substance abuse related health information:
1. Enter the name and address of the provider or the institution requested to release the information.
 2. Enter the full name of the patient (first, middle, and last).
 3. Enter the patient's CDC number.
 4. Enter the patient's date of birth.
 5. Enter the name and address of the person, or organization, to which the information is to be released.
 6. Record the specific purpose for the release of drug and substance abuse information, such as "provide appropriate treatment in a rehabilitation program," or "submit claim for disability."
 7. Record the specific information to be released such as, "treatment for alcoholism during July through December 1993."
 8. Enter the date, or the event, or the condition that terminates this release. Do not use terms such as "indefinitely" or "ongoing."
 9. Have the patient sign, time, and date the "Authorization for Release of Health Care Record" for each release of information related to drug and substance abuse information unless specifically exempted by law. Make sure the patient has not crossed out the words "substance abuse".
 10. Have the patient's signature witnessed by a competent adult who shall:
 11. Sign with full name (first, middle, and last).
 12. Date the form the day the signature is witnessed.
 13. Give a completed copy of the release to the patient if he requests a copy.

14. Forward all requests for the release of patient health-related information to the HRS to ensure that all statutory requirements are met.
- B. Health record staff follow specific release policies and procedures when releasing patient specific drug and substance abuse information as outlined below:
 1. Ensure authorizations to release drug and substance abuse information include the following informational items:
 - a. Date and time of disclosure.
 - b. Circumstances of disclosure, including the reason.
 - c. Limitations of information to carry out the purpose of the information disclosed.
 - d. Name and address of the individual to whom the information is disclosed.
 - e. Name of the individual who discloses the information.
 - f. Signature of patient.
 - g. Date of release.
 2. Ensure all patient-signed original releases and authorization(s) are incorporated into the UHR.