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Tip Sheet: Helping Employees Decide Whether to Disclose PHI or Refer Requests to Records Department

Barbara Duncan, HIPAA privacy officer at Stormont Vail Health in Topeka, Kansas, developed this tip sheet as a quick reference for employees to determine when they can release records to patients with protected health information (PHI) and when they should refer requests to one of the two release of information departments in the health system. Contact Duncan at bduncan@stormontvail.org.

Release of Records Tips

A patient's family member calls in to the office and requests a physician note to be faxed to her at work. What do you do?

Ask yourself a few questions:

- Am I the right person to process this request?
- Do I have an authorization signed by the patient?
- Do I know specifically what the family member needs and what the minimum necessary is to fill the request?
- Am I sure this is the appropriate way to fill this request?

Stormont Vail Health operates two offices whose primary responsibility is to process Authorizations for Medical Records. Their staff have training on how to release records if the authorization is appropriate, if any special restrictions on the records are requested, and whether the requester is entitled to the records and more.

- Hospital records can be obtained by contacting Release of Information:

Stormont Vail Health

Release of Information

1500 SW 10th St.

Topeka, KS 66604

785-xxx-xxxx or Fax: 785-xxx-xxxx

- Clinic records can be obtained by contacting Cotton O'Neil Administration:

Cotton O'Neil:

Attn: Records Release

823 S.W. Mulvane St., LL, Suite A

Topeka, KS 66606

785-xxx-xxxx or Fax: 785-xxx-xxxx

Make sure to direct the patient to the appropriate office.

ROI staff only provide copies of records, no verbal reports.

Examples of requests that should be transferred:

- Patient calling for past records.
- Government agencies requesting information for a background check.
- Law Enforcement requesting past information on a patient.
- DCF needing records for a potential abuse investigation.
- Family member calling to get a copy of the patient's record for any reason.
- Insurance company calling for past information.

Does the requesting patient have MyChart?

Remember, patients may request records be uploaded to MyChart so they will have access when needed.

If you have any concerns, please contact the Privacy Office.

Privacy Office

Phone: 785-xxx-xxxx

Stormont Vail Health Mission

Working together to improve the health of our community.

Our Commitment

The importance of our pride is to be fair and have honest dealings with the public, including patients, private and governmental payers and vendors, all of whom are important to our success.

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