

ORGANIZATION POLICY

POLICY TITLE: ONSLOW MEMORIAL HOSPITAL DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION TO PROVIDERS, FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

POLICY NUMBER: 1303

PURPOSE AND APPLICABLE LAW: The purpose of this Policy is to establish OMH's disclosure of patient information to providers, friends and family members in emergency situations.

DEFINITIONS: Certain terms having specific definitions are used in this Policy, and these terms and definitions are as follows:

- A. Individually identifiable health information means information that is a subset of health information, including demographic information collected from an individual, and:
 - i. Is created or received by a healthcare provider, health plan, employer, or healthcare clearinghouse; and
 - ii. Relates to the past, present or future physical or mental health or condition of an individual; the provision of health care to an individual; or the past, present or future payment for the provision of health care to an individual; and
 - 1. That identifies the individual; or
 - 2. With respect to which there is a reasonable basis to believe the information can be used to identify the individual.
- B. Protected health information means individually identifiable health information that is:
 - 1. Transmitted by electronic media (e.g., internet, intranet, extranet, facsimile dial up lines);
 - 2. Maintained in any medium of electronic media (e.g., computer hard drives, removable/transportable digital memory medium, such as magnetic tape or disk, optical disk, or digital memory card); or
 - 3. Transmitted or maintained in any other form or medium.

PROCEDURE:

OMH may disclose protected health information to another provider without first obtaining a written Authorization form the patient if the disclosure is for the purpose of providing emergency treatment to the patient.

OMH may disclose protected health information to the Patient's family or other person in an emergency circumstance if the disclosure is in the patient's best interest.

If the Request is from a Physician or other Health Care Provider

OMH shall verify that the request is for the purpose of providing emergency treatment to the patient. OMH shall document the name of the provider and the date of the request and shall provide the Patient Information to the requester in the manner specified.

OMH shall not deny an emergency request for protected health information by a provider simply because the provider has not submitted a written request on hospital or Provider letterhead.

If the Request is from a Patient, Spouse, Parent, Child or Other Person

OMH may disclose protected health information to a family member or other person in an emergency circumstance without requiring a signed Authorization to Disclose Health Information as long as the disclosure is in the patient's best interest. The protected health information disclosed shall be limited to that which is directly relevant to the person's involvement in the patient's care.

In cases where the patient's medical record indicates that the individual is an inmate, OMH shall notify the correctional institution of the request prior to providing the protected health information.

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 2005

REVISION DATE: January 12, 2009, January 2015

REVIEW DATE: December 2011, January 2018

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