

Release of Confidential Patient Health Information (PHI)

I. Policy

The Student Health Center (SHC) will maintain the confidentiality of patient information. Access to patient information is restricted, and information is not released without written consent unless otherwise required or allowed by law. Treatment records at the SHC that contain PHI will be protected under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

II. Procedure

- A. SHC staff will have designated roles with assigned access to patient records depending on job duties in the electronic medical record (EMR) system.
- B. Access to EMR at the SHC is granted through single sign on (SSO) upon hire to the SHC and will be inactivated upon separation of employment.
- C. Patients have secure access to their records via their patient portal with their SHSU username and password using SSO.
- D. The SHC does not offer a process to consent for release of future information that has not been collected.
- E. Students may facilitate release of information to their parent/guardian or other designee through the following methods:
 - i. Adding them as an emergency contact in their medical record;
 - ii. Verbally consenting in a specific visit for the medical provider to contact a parent/guardian to discuss that episode of care; this consent will be documented at the time of that visit;
 - iii. Authorize through completing the ROI form for that visit a documented release of written information to be sent to a designated person/s;
 - iv. Discussing their own care directly with their parent/guardian.
- F. Release of information is allowed through the following methods: In person, by fax, by mail service, and by **SECURE** email.
- G. Prior to releasing any patient information, it is the responsibility of the SHC staff members to ensure that an “Authorization for the Release of Health Information” (ROI) form is present in the chart; unless otherwise required or allowed by law.
 1. The ROI form is considered “episodic”, and a new form will be required for each request for release.
 2. The form is only for release of existing records.
 3. The SHC staff is responsible for sending the correct information as designated on the release form, within 5 business days of receipt.
 4. If a patient presents to the clinic and requests medical information, SHC staff must confirm two patient identifiers: SAM ID# and photo identification.
- H. HHS 45.CFR 164.524 gives individuals the right to access, upon request, the medical and health information about them in one or more designated record sets maintained by the or for the individuals’ health care providers. Thus, individuals

have a right to access a broad array of health information about themselves, whether maintained by a covered entity or on the covered entity's behalf, including medical records, billing and payment records, insurance information, laboratory test reports, x-rays, wellness program information, disease management program information and clinical notes (excluding psychotherapy notes).

*NOTE: The Student Health Center will consider all records maintained in the patient EHR part of our **designated record set**, whether originated in the EHR or scanned in as a received document from an outside facility and will therefore be available for release upon request.*

- G. The SHC is permitted or required by law to release patient health information without authorization for the following reasons:
1. Health care treatment, payment, and operations functions for the purpose of providing medical treatment, referring patients to another medical provider, to send patients a bill, file an insurance claim on a patients' behalf, and/or to perform quality improvement studies.
 2. Public health activities for preventing disease, injury, or disability such as but not limited to reporting deaths, reactions to medication, or other product problems; providing notification of recalls; conducting or facilitating public health investigation and/or intervention; or notifying public health authority of communicable or infectious disease.
 3. Reporting suspected abuse, neglect, or domestic violence.
 4. Health oversight activities for the purpose of audits, investigations, or inspections for accreditation and/or licensure.
 5. Judicial and administrative proceedings for responding to an order of a court or administrative tribunal, subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process.
 6. Law enforcement as required by law.
 7. Coroner and medical examiners for identifying a deceased person, determining a cause of death or other duties.
- H. To complete the Release of Information process, and as a method to track and verify the request completion, the SHC staff member that processes the request will scan the release form into the patient's EHR chart.
- NOTE: the release form must indicate what information was released.

III. Attachment

[Authorization for Release of Health Information](#)