



AL – HEALTH RECORDS ACCESS & RETURN POLICY

POLICY

The health record is the principle means of communication between health care providers and therefore must be both readily accessible for requestors and available for update by Health Information Services. Failure to comply with this policy will lead inevitably in the inability to neither produce nor update the record when needed.

Health records may be removed from the Health Information Services Department for the following reasons:

- Direct Patient Care.
- By Risk/Quality Management department for same day administrative purposes.
- Preparatory functions in an organized clinic, where the location of the chart is known at all times and with the single exception of Sunny Hill (which are returned on [each](#) Thursday), returned to the Health Information Department daily.
- For the purpose of multi-disciplinary rounds.

The latter two functions need to be approved by the Health Records Committee in advance, which may revoke this privilege if the terms of arrangement are not being followed.

Chart reviews for any other purpose including:

- Quality Assurance Review
- Research
- Provider chart completion
- Individual provider review

Are to be conducted in the Health Information Services Department.

Health Records must be returned to Health Information Services Department by 1700 hrs same day they are loaned, unless the patient is admitted. On rare occasion, it is possible to return a few charts by 1800, but this privilege may be revoked if access by Health Information Services becomes an issue.

Although the actual transport of records is the responsibility of the sending unit (if a patient has more than one encounter on a given day); Health Information Services Department must be notified immediately to update the chart tracking system.

Except for emergencies, 48 hours notice is required for in department chart review. For clinic requests, 24 hours notice is required. Research and Quality Assurance review time frames are addressed in other policies and procedures.

This process will be audited nightly; failure to comply may result in either:

- Loss of external review chart review privileges
- An incident report
- Paging relevant clinic staff to retrieve the chart to health records

DATES:

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| Approved by: Health Records Committee | |
| Approved by Medical Advisory Committee | |
| Review Date: | |
| Revision Date: | |