



Scope

This policy applies to all UWS campus health center employees responsible for maintaining, retaining, releasing, and destruction of all patient records, including, but not limited to, clinicians and the office staff.

Purpose

This policy ensures adherence to all applicable federal and state laws, statutes, and regulations regarding managing patient health records and Protected Health Information (PHI).

Definitions

- **Protected Health Information (PHI):** Any information in a health record that can be used to identify an individual, and that was created, used, or disclosed while providing care to a patient.
- **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA):** Law that provides privacy and security for a patient's PHI.
- **Electronic Medical Record (EMR):** An electronic version of a patient's medical history, that is maintained by the provider over time, and may include all of the key administrative clinical data relevant to that persons care under a particular provider.

Policy

UWS manages patient health records and Protected Health Information (PHI) according to HIPAA regulations and Oregon laws and regulations that govern patient record maintenance, retention, release and destruction. As such, the campus health center:

- Creates physical records for new patient registration, orders, and referrals.
- Creates electronic records during medical examinations and treatments.
- Maintains medical records electronically in HIPAA-compliant EMR software.
- Scans and uploads physical records into the EMR software or an encrypted folder on a secure university internal server.
- Destroys any physical copies of records containing PHI by shredding once uploaded into the EMR.

The clinic office manager serves as the medical records custodian and oversees the maintenance, release, and destruction of medical records in accordance with HIPAA and the medical records release policy.

Medical records are kept and maintained in electronic form for seven years, or if the patient was less than 18 years at the time of services, they are kept until the patient reaches the age of 25.

References: OAR 333-505-0050 – Medical Records

Policy 1405 Medical Records Maintenance

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Policies and Procedures

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Medical Records Maintenance

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CMS Electronic Health Records

Related Policies: [Policy 1406 Medical Records Request](#)