

# SOP Template: Patient Identification and Verification Procedures

This SOP establishes **patient identification and verification procedures** to ensure accurate and consistent identification of patients throughout their healthcare journey. It includes steps for confirming patient identity using multiple identifiers, verifying patient information before administering treatments or medications, and reducing the risk of errors. The goal is to enhance patient safety, prevent misidentification, and promote effective communication among healthcare providers.

## 1. Purpose

To outline standardized procedures for the identification and verification of patients to minimize the risk of misidentification and improve patient safety within the healthcare facility.

## 2. Scope

This SOP applies to all healthcare staff involved in patient care, including but not limited to physicians, nurses, allied health professionals, and administrative personnel.

## 3. Responsibilities

- **All Staff:** Responsible for adhering to the patient identification and verification procedures at every patient interaction.
- **Supervisors/Managers:** Ensure staff are trained and compliant with this SOP.
- **Quality and Safety Team:** Monitor compliance and conduct periodic audits.

## 4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Identifier	A unique element used to confirm the patient's identity (e.g., full name, date of birth, medical record number).
Verification	The process of confirming the patient's identity using approved identifiers before any care, treatment, or procedure.

## 5. Procedure

- Initial Patient Identification:**
  - Upon registration or admission, collect at least two approved identifiers:
    - Full legal name
    - Date of birth
    - Unique medical record number
    - Photo identification (if available)
  - Record identifiers in the patient's medical record and on their wristband (if used).
- Verification Before Interventions:**
  - Before administering medication, performing a procedure, or any clinical intervention, ask the patient (or responsible caregiver) to state (not just confirm) their full name and date of birth.
  - Compare the stated information with the patient's identification band and medical records.
  - If discrepancies are found, halt the intervention and resolve the discrepancy before proceeding.
- Use of Identification Bands:**
  - All inpatients must wear a hospital-issued identification band displaying at least two unique identifiers.
  - Check the band against the medical record at every encounter.
- Patient Transfers and Handoffs:**
  - Verify the patient's identity during any transfer between departments or handoff between providers.
  - Use the same approved identifiers during the handoff communication.
- Exception Handling:**
  - If a patient is unconscious or unable to identify themselves, use alternative verification methods such as identification from a caregiver and comparison with medical records, photographs, or other documented identifiers.

## 6. Documentation

- Document each patient verification check in the medical record.
- Record and investigate any identification discrepancies or near-misses.

## 7. Training

- All staff must receive initial and ongoing training on patient identification and verification procedures.
- Annual competency assessments recommended.

## 8. Audit and Compliance

- Regular audits will be conducted.
- Non-compliance will be addressed with corrective actions and additional staff training.

## 9. References

- World Health Organization: Patient Identification Guidelines
- Joint Commission: National Patient Safety Goals
- Facility-specific policies and procedures

## 10. Revision History

Date	Revision	Author	Summary of Changes
2024-06-15	1.0	Healthcare Quality Team	Initial SOP creation