SOP: Patient Identification and Verification Procedures

1. Purpose

This SOP details **patient identification and verification procedures** to ensure accurate patient recognition and prevent medical errors. It includes steps for confirming patient identity using multiple identifiers, verification protocols before administering treatments or medications, and guidelines for maintaining patient safety throughout healthcare interactions. The goal is to enhance patient safety, reduce the risk of misidentification, and improve overall quality of care.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all healthcare personnel involved in patient care, including nursing staff, physicians, laboratory technicians, and administrative personnel handling patient information and care activities.

3. Definitions

- **Patient Identifier:** Information unique to an individual patient, such as full name, date of birth, medical record number, or address.
- **Verification:** The process of confirming the patient's identity prior to any care, treatment, or service.

4. Responsibilities

- **All Clinical Staff:** Must follow the patient identification procedures as outlined.
- **Supervisory Staff:** Ensure compliance with this SOP and provide necessary training.

5. Procedure

1. **Initial Identification Upon Admission or Registration:**
   - Request the patient (or guardian) to state, not repeat, their full name and date of birth.
   - Verify information against official documentation (e.g., photo ID, medical record).
   - Assign a unique patient identifier upon first interaction.
2. **Use of Multiple Identifiers:**
   - Always use at least **two unique identifiers** (e.g., full name and date of birth, or medical record number and address).
   - Avoid using room number or bed number as identifiers.
3. **Verification Prior to Interventions:**
   - Confirm the patient's identity before administering medication, blood products, or performing procedures.
   - Ask the patient to confirm their full name and date of birth immediately before any procedure.
   - Check identification wristband or other approved identification methods if applicable.
4. **Special Situations:**
   - For patients unable to communicate, use wristband, registration data, or confirmation from a guardian/attendant.
   - In emergencies, follow established emergency identification protocols.
5. **Documentation:**
   - Record the identifiers used and verification steps in the patient's health record.

6. Training

All healthcare staff must receive training on patient identification and verification procedures during orientation and as part of ongoing education programs.

7. Quality Assurance and Compliance

- Regular audits to ensure compliance with identification procedures.
- Report and investigate all incidents of misidentification or near misses according to facility policy.

8. References

- Institutional policies on patient safety and identification
- National Patient Safety Goals by relevant authorities (e.g., Joint Commission)

9. Review

This SOP will be reviewed annually or as required to ensure relevance and compliance with best practices and regulatory requirements.