

SOP: Patient Identification and Verification

Purpose

This SOP establishes standardized procedures for **patient identification and verification** to ensure accurate patient recognition before any medical intervention. It includes guidelines for confirming patient identity through multiple identifiers, verification protocols during admission, treatment, and medication administration, and measures to prevent identification errors. The goal is to enhance patient safety, reduce medical errors, and improve the overall quality of healthcare delivery by maintaining consistent and reliable patient identification practices.

Scope

This SOP applies to all clinical and non-clinical staff involved in patient admission, assessment, diagnosis, treatment, transfer, discharge, and any procedure requiring patient identification at [Facility Name].

Responsibilities

- **All Staff:** Responsible for following patient identification and verification protocols at every point of care.
- **Clinical Supervisors:** Ensure staff compliance with SOP and conduct regular training on patient identification practices.
- **Quality Assurance Team:** Monitor adherence and report identification errors or near misses.

Procedures

1. **Patient Admission:**
 - Obtain and verify at least two unique identifiers (e.g., full name, date of birth, medical record number).
 - Confirm information verbally with the patient or authorized representative.
 - Place an identification wristband on the patient with accurate identifiers.
 - Document verification in the patient's medical record.
2. **Before Any Clinical Intervention (e.g., medication, procedure, specimen collection):**
 - Ask the patient to state their full name and date of birth.
 - Match provided information with the wristband and medical chart.
 - If discrepancies are found, stop the intervention and resolve identity before proceeding.
3. **Transfers and Handoffs:**
 - Repeat the identification process at all points of transfer between care providers or units.
 - Ensure receiving personnel confirm identity before accepting responsibility.
4. **Special Situations:**
 - If the patient is unconscious or unable to communicate, confirm identity with family members or documentation (ID, records).
 - If the patient is unknown (e.g., trauma), assign a temporary unique identifier and follow emergency protocols.

Acceptable Patient Identifiers

- Full legal name
- Date of birth
- Medical record or hospital number
- Photo identification card
- Other government-issued identification (where appropriate)

Documentation

- Document all identification and verification steps in the patient's record.
- Report and document any discrepancies, errors, or near misses following facility procedures.

Training

- All staff must complete initial and annual training on patient identification and verification procedures.

References

- Joint Commission International Patient Safety Goals
- [Local/National] Regulations on Patient Identification

Revision History

Date	Revision	Description	Approved By
2024-06-05	1.0	Initial SOP release	[Approver Name/Title]