

## Guidance: Patient Authorization

### **Patient Authorization**

In general, anytime you release patient information for a reason unrelated to treatment, payment (e.g. billing), or healthcare operations, a patient's written authorization is required. For example:

- If a patient's Life Insurance Company requests information from the patient's medical record in order to process an application for life insurance, this would require a signed authorization from the patient before information could be released.
- If a patient's employer contacted you and requested confirmation that the patient was seen in the clinic on a certain date, you must have the patient's signed authorization before sharing that information.

There is an inventory of Authorization Forms for a number of specific purposes as well as a brief description of each on the Privacy Program website at:

[http://hipaa.bsd.uchicago.edu/faculty\\_staff.html](http://hipaa.bsd.uchicago.edu/faculty_staff.html).

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** There are times when we may disclose information without an authorization. These disclosures must be accounted for so that we are able to report on those to the patient if requested. These situations are outlined in detail in detail in the section on Accounting of Disclosures.

**Any questions/comments/concerns please feel free to reach out to the Privacy Program at:**

**773-834-9716 or [hpo@bsd.uchicago.edu](mailto:hpo@bsd.uchicago.edu)**