

Patient Identification Policy **Hospital Guest Services**

The following Patient Identification Policy will be used to establish specific guidelines for thoroughly verifying patient identity. This should always be done before directing/escorting a patient to his/her destination or appointment. As a patient safety measure and to maintain HIPAA compliance, it is the responsibility of Guest Services Representatives (GSR) to correctly identify all patients. This is to ensure that the correct patient/family is provided with the appropriate information and/or is directed/escorted to the right destination (unit, surgery, or clinic appointment). It is also required that all new staff members sign a copy of this policy to ensure that each staff member understands the expectation that all patients will be correctly identified.

1. When assisting patients (outpatient or inpatient)

- a. The following identifiers should be used to verify patient identity:
 - i. **Patient's full name and date of birth are primary identifiers.**
 - ii. Patient's home address can be used as a secondary identifier.
- b. Verify armband, if available, with paperwork and/or electronic system.
- c. Additionally for escorting VUH surgery patients, the Guest Services Representative must ensure a proper hand off to the Holding Room:
 - i. If the Holding Room has asked for the patient, Guest Services Surgery Check-In staff will take the patient and the paperwork to the Holding Room. Surgery Check-In staff must witness the Holding Room staff's confirmation of the patient's name, date of birth, arm band and paperwork.
 - ii. If the patient is not expected in the Holding Room, the patient will be taken to the pre-surgery waiting area (3rd Floor VUH near entrance of Holding Room) and the paperwork will be taken into the Holding Room. The staff should be notified that the patient is in the pre-surgery waiting area.
- d. Additionally for escorting recently admitted patients to a room or a unit, the GSR will stop at the unit desk. The GSR will leave the paperwork with the medical receptionist and take the patient to the room. If asked to, the GSR will turn on the nurse's call light to ensure the patient's presence is known.

2. When assisting guests with locating an inpatient (General Information Status)

- a. The following identifiers should be used to verify patient identity:
 - i. Patient's first and last names are primary identifiers.
 - ii. Patient's age can be used as a secondary identifier.
- b. All guests must know the first and last names of a patient, in order to receive patient location.
 - i. GSRs should not go through any electronic system calling out or offering names.
 - ii. Unless it is absolutely necessary, GSRs should not disclose STAT names of General Info patients. That is the prerogative of the unit.
 - iii. For guests who don't have an accurate name for a patient, encourage them to contact a family member.