MR.14 The hospital develops and implements a policy for the release of medical records from the medical records department.

MR.14.1 There is a policy that describes the process for the release of medical records for patient care encounters (inpatient, outpatient, and emergency department).

MR.14.2 The hospital determines when to release medical records for reasons not related to direct patient care (e.g., research, utilization management, quality improvement, morbidity and mortality, and governmental requests).

MR.14.3 The hospital has an approval mechanism for the release of medical records for reasons not related to patient care. The approval mechanism is implemented.

Standard Intent:

The hospital implements processes to prevent unauthorized access to electronically or manually stored information. The medical records department should follow a hospital approved policy that manages the release of patient records and how their locations are tracked to avoid delays as well as misplacement or loss of these records. The policy should fulfill requirements to maintain confidentiality of patient information and situations when records are released for non-care purposes (committee reviews and improvement activities).

MR.15 The hospital has a system for tracking of medical records.

MR.15.1 There is a medical records tracking system to identify the location of any record not in the medical records department and its date and time of movement as well as subsequent movements, when applicable.

MR.15.2 The medical records tracking system includes all components of the medical records.

Standard Intent:

Regardless of how records are filled within facility, one of the biggest concerns is knowing where the record is when it is needed. For a record management system to be efficient, there must be some method of tracking the current location of a patient record.

The hospital must use manual or electronic record tracking systems or both. With such a system, the location of a medical record can be readily found. In addition, a list of previous places where the medical record was sent can be printed, e.g.; clinics including the date when the record was sent to that location. Some hospitals use a bar code system as seen in department stores and super markets while other enter details via a computer terminal in the Medical Record Department.