MR.12.2.1 The medical records are retained for a minimum of five years after the patient was last seen unless otherwise specified by laws and regulations. For minors, records shall be kept until he/she is eighteen years of age, and then for a minimum additional five years.

MR.12.2.2 The policy addresses the retention period of the different types of the medical records as well as the permanent types (e.g., records of medico-legal cases).

MR.12.2.3 The policy addresses the retention period of the different parts of the medical records as well as the permanent parts (master patient index, admission and discharge dates, name of the most responsible physician, diseases treated and operations performed; and a discharge summary for each admission).

MR.12.3 The method used for medical records destruction, when the retention period is complete, renders the information unreadable.

MR.13 — There is a policy that outlines how the medical records are stored.

MR.13.1 The policy addresses how the medical records are protected from loss, theft and deliberate alterations or destruction.

MR.13.2 The procedures for protection of medical records are implemented.

MR.13.3 The policy addresses how confidentiality, integrity, and security of the records will be maintained during storage.

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.

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.

MR.16 — The hospital uses standardized forms in medical records.

MR.16.1 The hospital uses standardized forms in medical records, generated based on hospital needs and the needs of healthcare professionals.

MR.16.2 The hospital assigns a structure to control the development of medical records forms (e.g., a forms committee or the medical records review committee).