Identification of Clients Accessing Health Services

1. Introduction

This policy establishes the correct procedure for authentication of a Client's identity using government-issued identification (ID): ideally, Government-Issued Photo ID and a Healthcare Card.

The information captured during a Client's registration at a healthcare facility is foundational to the Client's Electronic Health Record (EHR). Failure to properly authenticate a Client's identity can impact patient care by giving Healthcare Providers conflicting or incorrect information. Furthermore, as the Electronic Health Record (EHR) is shared across multiple facilities and systems, correcting these errors after the fact is very difficult and time consuming.

Authentication of Clients is also important for the purposes of accurately identifying non-residents of Canada, and determining the insurance status of residents of B.C. and other Canadian provinces or territories to ensure accurate billing for Healthcare services and/or products received.

1.1. Scope

This policy applies to all Staff involved in the admission or registration of a Client to a Providence Health Care (PHC) Facility.

The requirements for authentication outlined in this policy do not apply to minors under the age of 16. However, reasonable attempts should be made to verify the minor's identity. Should the minor or their guardian be unable to provide ID for client authentication purposes, Staff should accept the information provided verbally.

2. Policy

2.1. Authenticating Client Identity: General Guidelines

All Clients registering for Health Care Services at a PHC Facility must provide the following:

1. Government Issued Photo ID. This ID supplies the Documented Name of the Client. Expired ID is acceptable so long as it appears unaltered. (See Definitions for a list of examples).
2. Healthcare Card or number and/or an alternate proof of health insurance coverage for example, Armed Forces, Veteran's Affairs, Alberta Health.

Note: Identification that has been electronically scanned into a mobile device is equivalent to the actual piece of ID itself as long as the following criteria are met:

*   Photo (if present) is clear and matches the Client
*   All information that would be verified on the ID itself is legible in the picture, including but not limited to:

- o   Name
- o   Birthdate o Gender o Expiry Date
- o   Identity Number (e.g. BC Personal Health Number (PHN), other provincial health number)

PHC Staff must record the type of ID sighted and used to authenticate the Client's identity using the "Source of ID" field within Access Manager or CST Cerner.

PHC Staff must check, at time of registration, the validity and Eligibility of the BC Personal Health Number (PHN) assigned to each Client.

Any Client that does not have a valid and eligible BC PHN must not be classified as insured by BC Hospital Insurance (BCHI) or the Medical Services Plan (MSP).

2.2. Record of Admission (Access Manager)

PHC Staff using Access Manager must print a Record of Admission (ROA) when the registration process is complete, obtain the Client's signature on the ROA, and witness the signature.

If the Client indicates that there is an error on the ROA, PHC Staff must correct the error within Access Manager and re-print the ROA.

In cases where PHC Staff are unable to obtain a Client's signature on the ROA, the reason must be noted on the ROA.

Facesheet (CST Cerner)

Printing a facesheet upon registration is optional with CST Cerner. Depending on their workflow, work areas may choose to print and utilize a face sheet.

There is no legal requirement to collect a signature on face sheets.

2.3. Authenticating Client Identity: Residents of Canada

A non-expired BC Services Card or provincial Healthcare Card with the Client's photo and PHN on it will be considered sufficient ID to Authenticate the Client as it meets both requirements for authentication.

2.4. Authenticating Client Identity: Non-Residents of Canada

For non-residents of Canada, the preferred ID is his/her passport. Registration Staff must photocopy all identification provided (where possible) and record the passport number of these Clients in the admitting records.

If the Client is unable to provide a passport as ID accept any identification they provide, photocopy the identification, and keep the copy in the admitting records.

2.5. Recording the Client's Documented Name

The Documented Name (found on the Client's Government Issued Photo ID) must always be entered as the Client's name within the registration system. If the name on the piece of ID supplying the Documented Name differs from the name on the Healthcare Card (shortened name, initials, etc.), the Documented Name must be entered as the Client's name and the name on the Healthcare Card must be entered in the comments section of the admitting form.

If the Client informs Registration Staff that the name on their ID is wrong, Registration Staff must still capture the Documented Name as written on the ID. Registration Staff must advise the Client of their responsibility to contact the appropriate issuing agency to update/correct their ID.

For more information on how to determine the Documented Name, refer to the HIM best practice document titled How to Determine a Client's Name.

2.6. Clients without Sufficient Documentation

If the Client is unable to supply sufficient ID to satisfy the above, Registration Staff must:

1. Request any alternate documentation that supports the Client's declared name and current address (e.g. utility bill, student card, etc.);
2. Request any alternate picture ID, e.g. student or work identification, etc., as confirmation that the identification matches the person presenting it;
3. Determine whether the Client already has a BC PHN either by using HealthNet or at a system level through active integration with the EMPI based on the information provided by the Client.

Any Client who cannot provide any form of identification and cannot be found in the EMPI or HealthNet must be classified as a non-resident. PHC Staff will take a credit card imprint and request that the Client have a delegate bring in the required identification on behalf of the Client. If a delegate is not available, the Client is requested to bring in the required identification within three days of discharge. If the Client remains classified as a non-resident, all services rendered will be billable to the Client.

Staff must never refuse Health Care Services, even if a Client is not able to produce all or any identification. However, it is incumbent on PHC Staff to make all reasonable efforts to gain payment and accurate contact information, through which follow-up collections may occur.

2.7. Clients who are Inmates at Provincial or Federal Institutions or Escorted by the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)

Registration Staff will accept documentation as presented by the officer escorting the Client.

2.8. Inter-Facility Transfer of Clients

Registration Staff will accept documentation as presented by the Client or Healthcare Provider escorting the Client.

2.9. Recurring Clients

Staff must authenticate a Client's identity on each visit as part of the registration process. However, for Clients who frequently visit outpatient units, verbal confirmation is acceptable for subsequent returns to the same area as long as the Registration Staff is confident that they positively know the identity of the Client.

3. Responsibilities

3.1. Registration Staff

Registration Staff are responsible for requesting ID from all Clients that present at a PHC Facility to receive healthcare.

Registration Staff are responsible for searching the registration system during Client registration using the standard 3 search criteria to ensure that only one health record exists per Client.

When Clients present without sufficient ID, Registration Staff are responsible for requesting alternate forms of ID (e.g. student card, credit card bill, etc.) in order to establish the Client's identity.

Registration Staff are responsible for verifying the Eligibility of a Client's PHN in HealthNet or at a system level through active integration with the EMPI.

In cases where Clients present without a BC Healthcare Card, Registration Staff are responsible for determining whether the Client already has a BC PHN either by using HealthNet or at a system level through active integration with the EMPI.

Where the registration system permits, Registration Staff must record the type of ID they were shown by the Client as part of the registration process within the Source of ID field in Access Manager or CST Cerner.

Registration Staff are responsible for reporting cases of suspected fraud as per the Personal Health Number: Fraudulent Use of policy. Registration Staff are responsible for explaining to Clients the authority under which Client identity information is collected should they be asked (see the referenced Acts below).

Registration Staff using the Access Manager system are responsible for printing a ROA when the registration process is complete, obtaining the Client's signature on the ROA, and witnessing the signature.

3.2. Registration Supervisor

The Registration Supervisor is responsible for establishing PHN validation procedures for Registration Staff to follow.

The Registration Supervisor is responsible for establishing procedures for reporting cases of suspected fraud as per the Personal Health Number: Fraudulent Use of policy.

The Registration Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that Registration Staff are aware of the fact that Client identity information is collected under the authority of the Hospital Act, the Health Authorities Act, and other legislation including the Hospital Insurance Act, Continuing Care Act, Mental Health Act, and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA).

3.3. The Office of Health Information Management (HIM) Registration Standards & Data Quality

The Office of HIM Registration Standards & Data Quality is responsible for establishing and maintaining policy with regards to authenticating Client identity and ensuring that these policies adhere to Ministry of Health requirements.

3.4. BC Clinical and Support Services (BCCSS) Society

BCCSS is responsible for obtaining the Client's permission before contacting the CBSA to verify the Client's residency status within Canada.

4. Compliance

Reports indicating registrations performed where the ID sighted was not recorded or no ID was sighted must be reviewed by HIM Data Quality and reported to HIM Registration Standards & Data Quality to determine if follow-up action with the Registration Staff is required.

5. Supporting Documents

5.1. Related Policies

Fraudulent Use of Personal Health Number
Release of Information and Belongings to Law Enforcement

5.2. Guidelines/Procedures/Forms

How to Determine a Client's Name
Patient/Client Privacy
Provincial Enterprise Master Patient Index Data and Best Practice Rules
Record of Admission and Signature Collection
Sighting Client ID

Source of ID Field
Unknown Registrations

6. Definitions

"Authenticating" means determining and verifying the identity of a Client by way of inspecting corroborating identification (preferably Government Issued Photo ID).

"Client" means a patient, resident or person receiving care or services from PHC.

"Documented Name" means a name that has been recorded in, and comes from, an acceptable source document – preferably Government Issued Photo ID.

"Electronic Health Record" means an electronic collection of health and demographic information about a specific Client. This includes (among other items): records of visits to healthcare facilities, demographic information about the Client, medical images and test results, dictation, and transcripts.

"Eligibility" means a Client's status in being able to receive publicly funded healthcare services and, in turn, payment to a Healthcare Provider for receipt of those services.

"Enterprise Master Person Index (EMPI)" is a provincial software system under the Ministry of Health that can detect multiple Client identities for a single Client from disparate systems. These systems may have different Client identifiers or Medical Record Numbers. The EMPI can form a linkage set of Client identifiers for the provision of health care. Also known as Enterprise Master Patient Index.

"Facesheet" means the form available to print at time of registration/reception containing the Client's demographic information, contact information, care provider information, and basic information about the Client's reason for presenting to the facility.

"Facility" means any hospital, clinic, building or other physical location where PHC provides health services.

"Government Issued Photo ID" means a piece of identification issued by a government or government authorized agency that has the owner's photograph on it. The following are acceptable forms of Government Issued Photo ID:

- Driver's License BC Services Card (any photo version)

- BC Identification Card (BCID)

- Provincial Healthcare Card (only if it has a photo)

- Canadian Citizenship Card

- Passport

- Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Identity Card

- Canadian Permanent Resident Card

- Certificate of Indian Status

- Student/Work/Visit/Resident Permit (only if it has a photo)

- Canadian Forces ID Card (only if it has a photo)

- Foreign Affairs / Consular ID (only if it has a photo)

"Healthcare Card" means a piece of government issued identification that shows a Client's provincial health insurance number. In BC, this is the PHN and can be found on both the CareCard and the BC Services Card.

"HealthNet" is the health information system for BC.

"Healthcare Provider" means any person employed by PHC, or any other health authority, to offer any service related to the Client's physical or mental well-being.

"Health Care Services" means any service related to the Client's physical or mental well-being, offered by PHC.

"Medical Record Number (MRN)" means the unique clinical information system number to represent a single Client. Also known as a health record or chart number.

"Personal Health Number (PHN)" means the unique numeric identifier assigned to each individual who obtains health services in British Columbia. This includes non-residents (e.g. a patient from out of the country) and those persons who are ineligible for MSP. Assigning a PHN to a patient does not make them eligible for publicly funded health care via MSP.

"Record of Admission (ROA)" means the form printed at time of registration/reception containing the Client's demographic information, contact information, care provider information, and basic information about the Client's reason for presenting to the facility. The ROA is signed by the Client to certify that the information recorded is true to the best of their knowledge.

"Registration Staff" means any Staff member registering a Client at a PHC Facility.

"Registration Supervisor" means the PHC Staff member tasked with leading Registration Staff at one or more PHC Facilities.

"Staff" means all employees (including management and leadership), Medical Staff Members (including physicians, midwives, dentists and Nurse Practitioners), residents, fellows and trainees, students, volunteers, contractors and other service providers engaged by PHC.

7. References

Questions:

Contact the Registration Standards & Data Quality office at 1080 Howe Street (604-806-8106).

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