I. PURPOSE
To determine procedures for rectifying illegible documentation in a medical record and to determine procedures for suspension of physicians for non-compliance with medical record completion.

II. POLICY
This policy is applicable to all areas where the legibility of physician’s orders and progress notes/reports are in question. It is also applicable to all healthcare professionals’ documentation within the medical record.

III. PROCEDURE
A. If a physician or other authorized healthcare professional writes an order on the medical record that is not legible; the order shall be questioned for clarification.
   1. The person receiving the clarification shall note on the order sheet of the medical record the exact order.
   2. An example of this would be:
      Order clarification: Ambien 5mg po at bedtime
      or
      V.O.R.B. (Verbal Order Read Back): Ambien 5mg po at bedtime
   3. Failure to clarify an illegible order shall result in employee intervention as appropriate to situation.

B. Monitoring:
   1. Legibility may be monitored through concurrent and retrospective chart review.
   2. Medication errors that result from an illegible order shall be reported.
   3. Unresolved legibility issues with physicians and allied health professionals shall be reported to the appropriate physician committees.
   4. Unresolved legibility issues for other healthcare professionals shall be reported to the department manager and made a part of the annual review process.

C. Loose Report Deficiency Analysis provides a process to check that medical record documentation meets requirements established through the Medical Staff Bylaws / Rules and Regulations, The Joint Commission, The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMMS), and other regulatory agencies.
   1. The HIM tech performing the final analysis shall be responsible for reviewing the medical record, including any loose reports, for completeness and accuracy upon discharge of the patient and prior to the medical record being deemed complete.

D. Physician Suspension / Incomplete medical record notification
E. Delinquency is defined as any chart deficiency (signage, date or dictation) that has not been completed within 30 days of discharge. Suspension is defined as the temporary suspension of a physician’s privilege to admit, consult, schedule or perform new surgery or procedures. Only those patients who are currently in-house under the suspended physician’s care may be seen and treated by said physician. Suspension remains in effect until delinquent records are completed. Physicians are still obligated to their Emergency Room call duties as applicable.

F. Only the Chief of Staff, CEO, or his/her designee can remove a physician from suspension if all of his/her records are not completed. The only procedures allowed to continue during a physician’s suspension are those already scheduled. No additional procedures are allowed to be scheduled until the delinquent medical records are completed. The suspension process may be halted during a physician leave-of-absence, vacation, or illness. Such decisions shall be made by the Chief of Staff, CEO or his/her designee.

G. If a physician is exempted from the suspension process or if the process is delayed, the physician shall be returned to suspension status as soon as the event has ended. In the case of a leave of absence, vacation or illness, the returning physician shall be put on preliminary suspension status for one (1) week. If records remain incomplete after one week, the physician shall be suspended immediately.

1. On the 1st day of each Month (or the first Monday if the 1st of the Month is on a weekend), physicians’ shall be notified of any outstanding incomplete records. Notification shall be accomplished in one of the following ways: via email, fax, phone call, or in person. It is the responsibility of the physician’s office to notify the physician of receipt of notification (following).

2. On the 15th of each month (or the following Monday), each physician or physician’s office shall receive a follow-up phone call with regard to any remaining outstanding incomplete records.

3. On the 25th of each month (or the following Monday), privileges shall be suspended for incomplete medical records. HIM shall notify each physician’s office and Medical Staff Services of the suspension via email.

4. Upon receipt of this email, Medical Staff Services shall notify Administration, all Directors/Managers, Scheduling and the Chief of Staff of suspension notices.

5. Reinstatement of privileges shall be automatic upon completion of all delinquent medical records. HIM shall notify Medical Staff Services of the completion of charts and Medical Staff Services shall then notify all departments as above of the reinstatement of privileges for that physician.

6. Habitual non-compliance with Medical Staff Rules & Regulations for completion of medical records affects patient care. If a physician has been suspended five (5) times for non-compliance within a 12-month period, a report of non-compliance shall be forward to the Quality Review Committee.

7. The HIM Manager or designee shall be responsible for coordinating the incomplete record notification and suspension process.
Notice of Incomplete Medical Records

DATE

Dear

Please accept this letter as Notification of incomplete records. This notification is to inform you of outstanding records greater than _________ days. The Health Information Management Department is staffed Monday through Friday, 8:00a.m. to 5:00p.m., in order to assist you with record completion. Requesting your records in advance shall confirm all records are available at a time that is convenient for you.

The Medical Record Department shall make charts available after hours if prior arrangements are made.

If you have questions or require assistance, please contact HIM at 817 748-8774.

Victoria Kamp, RHIT, CCA
HIM Supervisor

Dr. O. David Taunton, Jr.,
Chief of Staff

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THIS INFORMATION IS AUTOMATICALLY GENERATED THRU CPSI WHEN MEDICAL RECORDS GENERATES LETTERS FOR DOCTORS
LETTER OF SUSPENSION

Dear Dr.

This is NOTIFICATION OF SUSPENSION of your admitting and surgical privileges at Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital Southlake pending completion of outstanding medical records. This suspension shall be lifted upon completion of all outstanding records. Physicians on suspension may not schedule future surgeries including pre-op testing until charts are completed.

If you have completed records prior to receiving this notice please disregard.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dr. Oscar D. Taunton, Jr.
Chief of Staff