



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
HARBOR-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER**

SUBJECT: SIGNATURE SUBSTITUTION

POLICY NO. 633

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| CATEGORY: Health Information Management | EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/02 |
| POLICY CONTACT: Charles Onunkwo | UPDATE/REVISION DATE: 11/21 |
| REVIEWED BY COMMITTEE(S): | |

PURPOSE:

To ensure medical record authentication when the original author is unavailable.

POLICY:

Harbor-UCLA Medical Center shall ensure that physicians or authorized providers who dictate or create a report intended for inclusion in the electronic medical record (ORCHID) authenticate the report in a timely manner. If the original author is unavailable, the report may be electronically signed by a substitute supervisory physician or the Chief Medical Officer(CMO).

This policy may be applicable when Resident Physicians who have completed their training programs and terminated their service at the medical center failed to authenticate prior to their departure or have moved away, and/or if the Attending Physician has relocated or died.

PROCEDURE:

In situations of this type, the report may be electronically authenticated by an appropriate supervisory physician, designated by the Department Chair in whose department the missing individual was appointed, or designated by the Chief Medical Officer. Accordingly, Health Information Management (HIM) Staff will redirect the signature deficiency in ORCHID to the designated substitute. An authenticating electronic signature given in this scenario shall be deemed as valid, having the same force and value as that of the original author.


When an authenticating signature is provided in this manner, the report shall reflect an addendum to indicate that the individual who dictated or created the report is unavailable to provide authentication. If the supervisory physician had no direct role in the clinical management of the case, the supervisory physician will add this fact on to the report prior to signing. The report will appropriately reflect identity/credentials of the supervisory physician whose electronic signature will be used to authenticate the report.

When Resident Physicians who have completed their training programs seek to sign out with the Health Information Management Director (HIM Director), their documentation completion and authentication status

REVISED: 1/02, 2/09, 5/14, 11/18, 11/21

REVIEWED: 2/05, 5/14, 11/18, 11/21

APPROVED BY: 
Anish Mahajan, MD
Chief Executive Officer


Anish Mahajan, MD
Chief Medical Officer


Joy LaGrone, RN, MSN
Interim Chief Nursing Officer



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
HARBOR-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER**

SUBJECT: SIGNATURE SUBSTITUTION

POLICY NO. 633

shall be verified and validated by the HIM Director or designee, before they are signed out. These clinical documents include History & Physicals, Discharge Summaries and Operative Reports.

REFERENCES:

The Joint Commission – Hospital Accreditation Requirements – RC.01.02.01
CMS Requirements - Condition of Participation 482.23(c) (3)(iii) and 482.24 (b)
California Code of Regulations Title 22 – Licensing of Health Facilities -70751(g)