Department of Nursing
POLICY AND PROCEDURE

POLICY NUMBER: 261
VERSION: 1

SUBJECT: PATIENT IDENTFICATION

PURPOSE: To ensure that the care, treatment and services are consistent with the prescribed plan of care and are delivered to the correct patient.

To prevent medical errors and improve patient safety by ensuring accurate patient identification.

POLICY: Each employee is responsible for using two identifiers (e.g. name and date of birth or name and Medical Record Number) to match the service or treatment to the correct patient.

PROCEDURE GUIDELINES:

1. In the Ambulatory Care setting, name and date of birth are the usual patient identifiers.

2. When using identifiers, ask patient to state their name and date of birth rather than asking them to verify a name and date of birth stated by the staff member.

3. Two patient identifiers will be used when administering medications, blood or blood components.

4. Two patient identifiers will be used when collecting blood samples and other specimens for clinical testing and prior to labeling any specimen.

5. Two identifiers will be used when providing other treatments or procedures.

6. **DO NOT USE** the patient's room number or physical location as a form of an identifier.

7. Educate patients, and as needed, the family on the importance and relevance of providing correct patient identification.

8. When there is doubt about a patient's true identity, staff shall thoroughly investigate, document, and report any unusual situation or incident to the appropriate supervising staff.

9. Prior to handing any documents to the patient, verify that the documents match the patient's identity (e.g. referrals, requisitions, discharge summary).

REFERENCES:

National Patient Safety Goals (NPSG), Goal 1. Improve the Accuracy of Patient Identification, 2013

Los Angeles County, DHS Annual Nursing Competency, 2012

Approved By: Susan Knapp (CHIEF NURSING OFFICER I)	
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