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**SECTION: HIPAA**

**AREA: HIPAA PRIVACY/SECURITY POLICIES**

**SUBJECT: RELEASE OF PATIENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

### **PURPOSE**

To inform the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (“UAMS”) Workforce about Patient Directory procedures for providing information and opting patients out of the Directory.

### **SCOPE**

The UAMS Workforce.

### **DEFINITIONS**

UAMS Workforce shall mean physicians, employees, volunteers, residents, students, trainees, visiting faculty, and other persons whose conduct, in the performance of work for UAMS, is under the direct control of UAMS, whether or not they are paid by UAMS.

To access any other terms or definitions referenced in this policy, go to the UAMS HIPAA website at [hipaa.uams.edu](http://hipaa.uams.edu).

### **POLICY**

Unless the patient requests UAMS not to disclose Patient Directory Information, UAMS may provide Patient Directory Information to a person requesting such information if the person specifies the patient’s name. UAMS will not disclose any information about a patient who opts out of the Patient Directory and does not want any information shared with a caller or visitor.

### **PROCEDURE**

1. When a caller or visitor specifies the patient’s name, Patient Directory Information that can be shared is limited to the following:
  - Patient name;
  - Location in the facility;
  - One word statement of condition that does not communicate specific medical information about the patient – to be released by UAMS Medical Center Patient Care Team or Office of Communications and Marketing. See policy NR.AD.1.23 Patient Confidentiality; and
  - Religious affiliation – only released to members of the Clergy
2. UAMS may release the patient’s religious affiliation, if given to UAMS by the patient, only to members of the Clergy. Members of the Clergy do not have to specify a patient’s name to

request Patient Directory Information. Clergy requests for a list of patients by denomination will be handled by the Office of Pastoral Care at (501) 686-6217.

3. Requests for a patient condition will be referred to the nursing unit except for requests from members of the media. *Administrative Guide Policy 13.1.03, Media Relations.*
4. Patients may restrict or prohibit release of their information from the Directory. UAMS will “flag” Directory listings and other applicable records to indicate a patient has opted out of the Directory and wishes to restrict or prohibit release of their information. Such a “flag” may indicate the patient is “Private Encounter,” “No Info” or “Private Encounter/No Info.”
5. The electronic health record out of which Directory information is provided must first be checked to ensure that the patient has not opted out of the Directory (No Info Patient/Private Encounter). The UAMS employee receiving the request for information about a patient who has opted out of the Directory should simply state that UAMS has no information about that patient.
6. The *UAMS Notice of Privacy Practices* will inform patients of their rights to omit some or all of their information from the Directory. UAMS Workforce should reference the *UAMS Notice of Privacy Practices* to inform the patients about the information in the Directory and to describe how this information may be disclosed. The *UAMS Notice of Privacy Practices* is available on UAMS Forms OnDemand and the UAMS HIPAA Office website at [hipaa.uams.edu](http://hipaa.uams.edu).
7. Members of the media who request Patient Directory Information will be referred to the UAMS Office of Communications and Marketing, (501) 686-8149 or (501) 395-5989 in accordance with *Administrative Guide Policy 13.1.03, Media Relations.*
8. If the patient is incapacitated or in an emergency treatment situation, UAMS may use or disclose some or all of the information in the Directory provided the disclosure is:
  - Consistent with a known, prior expressed preference of the patient; and
  - UAMS determines it is in the patient's best interest.

When it becomes practical to do so, UAMS will inform these patients about the uses and disclosures for Directory purposes and offer them the opportunity to opt out of the Directory.

9. UAMS may elect on its own, without a patient’s request, to exclude certain patients from the Directory and not release any information. Examples are when the safety/security of patients or others are at risk, or at the request of a UAMS department, unit or office. When it is determined that the reason for excluding the patient from the Directory is no longer necessary, the patient may be included in the Directory.

**SANCTIONS**

Violation of this Policy will result in disciplinary action, in accordance with *Administrative Guide Policy 4.4.02, Employee Discipline* and *Administrative Guide Policy 2.1.42, HIPAA Sanctions Policy*.

Signature:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date: December 7, 2020