OPENING AND SORTING INCOMING MAIL

PURPOSE:

To assure that the incoming mail is sorted correctly and routed to most appropriate staff/area for disposition.

PROCEDURE:

1. Pick-up the departmental mail from the LSUHSC Mail Room at 0930 hours and 1430 hours in the afternoon.

2. Separate the campus envelopes from the outside mail.

3. Campus envelopes containing the following documents should be sorted as follows:
   A. Loose reports should be forwarded to the sorting staff.
   B. Records from other facilities are routed to the receptionist for filing in the patient’s medical records.
   C. Forms to obtain protected health information from other facilities should be routed to the receptionist for processing.
   D. All subpoenas received shall be directed to the Supervisor of Release of Information for disposition.
   E. Other mail shall be sorted as addressed and routed via the internal mail boxes in the department.

4. Sort and route the outside mail by department or sections as addressed.

5. Open each envelope, stamp the request with the date received and punch two holes in each request.

6. Route any checks received immediately to the Supervisor, Release of Information for disposition.

7. Review the authorization to disclose protected health information. If the authorization is not HIPAA compliant, complete the attached letter, log in and out of the system (indicating the reason why the authorization is not HIPAA compliant) and return to the sender.

8. Review each letter or correspondence to identify the needs of the requesting party.
9. Highlight the following information:
   
   A. Patient's name
   B. Medical record number
   C. Date of birth
   D. SSN#
   E. Requestor's name and address
   F. Information being requested
   G. Deadline for receipt of information (if available)

10. Prioritize all second requests, urgent/rush requests or any other requests that should be answered within a specified number of days by placing these requests on top of all other requests.

11. Route the following requests to the Director, Assistant Director or designee for disposition:
   
   A. OIG requests (Office of Inspector General)
   B. CMS requests (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services)
   C. CSC requests (Contractor for Medicare and Medicaid Services)
   D. PRO requests (Peer Review Organizations, including the DynKePro)
   E. Risk Management/Legal Affairs requests

12. Sort remaining requests for medical information as follows:
   
   A. EMS only from healthcare providers (non attorney request) - route to appropriate staff to print reports from the system.
   B. All other requests - route to vendor

13. Print x-ray reports and/or laboratory reports as needed from the appropriate software application and paper clip to the request for protected health information.

14. Check the 3M/3M/SoftMed Chart Location application to verify if the patient has records established in Women's Health (W1), Children Services (C1), Faculty Clinic (D1), Family Medicine (M1), Feist-Weiller Cancer Center (F1) or Ambulatory Care (A1).

15. Identify the medical records number for each request received using the INVISION application and note in the upper right hand corner of the request along with the last date of service and the hospital service code i.e., 10/1/05 -EMS. Specific attention should be given to the services codes of FCC (Faculty Clinic) and CCC/FPC (Family Medicine and Comprehensive Care).
16. Provide the mail to the vendor responsible for release of information. The vendor will be responsible for the following:

   A. Log into the release of information system
   B. Identify the chart location using 3M/SoftMed’s Chart location software
   C. Enter chart request into the 3M/SoftMed Reservation application
   D. Generate the Release of Information report of reservations
   E. Sort the reservation slips in terminal digit order upon receipt
   F. Compare the reservation slips to the requests for information to ensure that a slip printed for each request for information
   G. Return the reservation slips to the HIM staff for record retrieval

17. Retrieve the medical record and verify that the information requested is available in the patient’s medical record.

18. Route the medical record to the copy service staff to photocopy the information requested.

19. Return the record to file after the information has been photocopied (copy service staff).