

University of Texas Medical Branch Pulmonary Function Clinic Policy 01-06 Confidentiality	Effective Date: Aug 88 Revised Date: Oct 05 Review Date: Aug 23
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Confidentiality

Audience All personnel in the Pulmonary Laboratories: Pulmonary Function Clinics, and Center for Pulmonary Rehabilitation.

Purpose To protect the patient's right to confidentiality.

Policy The following is the above stated policy:

- Any information about a patient, which any employee sees or hears in the performance of his/her duties, is considered confidential.
- The medical record, electronic hard copy medical record, and any other patient information is a confidential document and is to be used only in the performance of an employee's duties.
- Medical records are not to be used as reading material.
- In order to protect employees from a compromising situation and to insure patient confidentiality, UTMB personnel working in the areas listed above may not have access to medical information concerning themselves or their family members (related by blood or marriage).
- If within an employee's normal course of business he/she finds it necessary to review, audit, analyze, copy, or perform any other function requiring access to medical record information on a family member or themselves, that employee must notify his/her supervisor and the job assignment will be performed by the supervisor or delegated to another employee.
- Confidential information is not to be repeated or discussed with anyone, including other employees within your department or employees from other departments – unless it is within the employee's normal course of patient care delivery.
- While patient information may be communicated for the purpose of caring for a patient, casual discussions regarding a patient, discussions in public areas, and/or unauthorized release of information are not in the best interest of the patient or the hospital and are a breach of the UTMB standards of employee conduct.
- Change of custody: Members assigned to deliver patient files through interdepartmental or interdisciplinary will have sole custody of the file until it reaches destination and must not relinquish that duty to another.
- Professional discussion of a patient's condition or medical plan will not be openly discussed in the hallway or waiting areas, but kept confidential by limiting discussion to a PRIVATE area for open, verbal conversation.
- Abuse of this policy shall lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- Internal and external faxing of materials should follow guidelines as stated by UTMB HIPPA Regulations.

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This form documents the approval and history of the policies and procedures for the Pulmonary Function Laboratory. The Medical Director signs all policies verifying initial approval. Annually thereafter, the Director and/or designee may approve reviews and revisions.

Date	Approved by:	Signature
11/07	V. Cardenas, MD Medical Director Pulmonary Laboratory	
6/09	V. Cardenas, MD No changes to the policy	
7/10	V. Cardenas, MD No changes to the policy	
2/12	A. Duarte, MD Medical Director Pulmonary Function Laboratory No changes to the policy	
5/14	A. Duarte, MD Medical Director Pulmonary Function Laboratory No changes to the policy	
8/16	A. Duarte, MD Medical Director Pulmonary Function Laboratory No changes to the policy	
11/17	A. Duarte, MD Medical Director Pulmonary Function Laboratory No changes to the policy	
9/19	A. Duarte, MD Medical Director Pulmonary Function Laboratory No changes to the policy	
8/21	A. Duarte, MD Medical Director Pulmonary Function Laboratory No changes to the policy	
8/23	A. Duarte, MD Medical Director Pulmonary Function Laboratory No changes to the policy	