

Administrative Policy

Sault Area Hospital

SUBJECT:	AUTHENTICATION/ ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE	NUMBER:	7.1
APPLIES TO:	All Staff & Physicians	NEW/REVISED:	New
AUTHORIZED BY:	Chief Financial Officer	APPROVAL DATE:	September 2001
CATEGORY:	Privacy & Information Technology	PAGE:	1 of 2

POLICY

It is the policy of Sault Area Hospital (SAH) to allow for electronic signatures in accordance with this policy.

DEFINITIONS

Electronic Signature

Electronic signatures include, but are not limited, to the following:

1. A "digitized signature," an electronically-recorded handwritten signature;
2. A "digital mark," defined as a code indicating acceptance or approval which requires security protocols; or
3. A "digital signature," an electronically recorded handwritten signature.

Authentication

Verification process used to establish authorship.

PROCEDURE

Authentication Procedure for Physician Dictation

1. The individual shall sign an Electronic Signature Form - letter of understanding which will be retained in his/her credentials file.
2. In order to acquire a dictation number; contact the Health Records Department. The Supervisor of Transcription assigns the 3 digit ID number to the individual. A confidential reference file identifying each physician and individual access (dictation) number is maintained by the Health Records Department.
3. At the beginning of the dictation, the dictator shall:
 1. Enter his/her unique dictation ID number (3 digits)
 2. State his/her name
 3. State the patient's name and the PIN or Requisition/Accession number
4. Authentication of a dictated report by this means shall be based upon verification of these criteria at the time of transcription. Once the physician's name and dictation number correspond with the reference file in Health Records, the report is labeled as authenticated.
5. A statement is included on each transcribed report stating the report has been dictated and authenticated.

6. A copy of the authenticated report will be forwarded to the individual's mailbox in the Doctor's Lounge or in the designated Diagnostic Service department.
IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DICTATING INDIVIDUAL TO VERIFY THE CORRECTNESS OF THE REPORT.

Time limit for review and edit by the dictating individual is as follows:

- Radiology No reports are circulated without signature
- Pathology 24hrs
- Health Records 10 days

If no revisions are communicated within the above time limits of the transcription date, the original report is considered to be authenticated.

7. If the medical transcriptionist has concerns regarding the accuracy of the transcribed report ie. inaudibility of the dictation, or, I.D. number and dictator name does not correlate, the report will be deemed unauthenticated. This unauthenticated report is returned for clarification.
8. The Radiologist will authenticate his/her reports by physically signing a hard copy of the report. This signed copy of the Diagnostic Imaging report will be the authenticated final version of the report.
9. If any errors are identified by the dictating individual, the corrections shall be made on the copy and returned to the transcriptionist of the related department i.e. Laboratory, Diagnostic Imaging, Health Records. The corrected copy will be redistributed.
10. The dictating individual will be held legally liable for what has been entered into a patient's record under their name.
11. The author of the report must be easily determined on the report. If the report is written by an intern / clinicians under the direction of or in consultation with a staff physician; the staff physician co-authenticates the report. A printed copy is circulated to the staff physician, intern/clinician for their review and the above steps No. 6, No. 7, & No 9 will apply.