

Section 9	Clinical Policies	09/26/97	-Originated
Subject 9.13	General Procedures	05/03/12	-Reviewed w/ changes -Reviewed w/o changes
Policy 9.13.10	Changing Patient Identifiers (Name and Unit History Number)	07/24/12	-Effective Health Information Management -Author

Changing Patient Identifiers

Definitions

Primary name: The name the patient is currently using.

Alias name: - The name(s) previously used by or assigned to a patient (e.g., maiden name, nickname, misspelled name accidentally entered into the Master Patient Index (MPI)).

Medical Record Number (MR#): (also known as the medical record number)

- A six digit number with an alpha suffix assigned to UTMB patients (not specimens) during their first visit to UTMB. Each patient is to receive one number and this number is to be used each time the patient has an encounter with UTMB.

Patient Identifiers: – Includes name, MR#, sex, and date of birth

Active Patients: Patients who are currently registered and receiving care in the Emergency Department, an Observation Unit, Day Surgery Unit, as an inpatient or in an ambulatory environment.

Policy

UTMB employees responsible for registering patients for inpatient, outpatient or emergency care should ensure that patient identifiers are updated as needed.

It is the responsibility of all patients being registered at a UTMB facility to provide other name(s) by which they have been known in order to prevent the assignment of an additional MR#.

Any updates or corrections to patient identifiers must be entered into the Master Patient Index as soon as possible.. However, changing active patient identifiers must be done with caution. If an identity change is necessary for an active patient, approval must be obtained from a Nurse Manager/Clinical Operations Administrator and the Pathology Department/Blood Bank Division before any patient identifiers are changed. If approvals for a change are obtained one of three specific processes must be followed (described below under Procedure).

In circumstances requiring the confidentiality of a patient’s identity, the patient may be registered/admitted under a fictitious name if approved by a [Nurse Manager/Clinical Operations Administrator](#). The account will be amended at discharge to reflect the legal name.

Procedure

Changing a Patient’s Identifier

Any name assigned to a patient should remain in the MPI to allow for the necessary cross-referencing to the unique medical record number and any

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**Procedure,
continued**

associated medical information. Note: the only exception is the removal of “Baby Girl/Boy” if the infant’s last name does not change.

Any change to a patient’s sex, date of birth and/or MR# should be done as soon as possible once the error is identified and proper documentation is obtained, if appropriate (e.g., birth certificate, insurance card).

If an active patient’s identifiers need to be changed and approvals from the Nurse Manager/Clinical Operations Administrator and Pathology Department/Blood Bank Division have been obtained one of the following processes will be followed:

- [How to change a patient’s name, sex and/or date of birth](#)
- [How to correct a patient’s MR# when a patient has more than one MR#](#)
- [How to correct a patient’s identifiers and separate medical record information when a patient has been registered/admitted with another patient’s MR#](#)

References	9.2.21 Unit History Number Assignment IHOP 9.3.13 Patients’ Rights and Responsibilities
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