

Institutional Handbook of Operating Procedures

Policy 9.13.10

Section: 9 Clinical Policies	Responsible Vice President
Subject: General Procedures	Responsible Entity: Health Information Management

I. Title

Changing [Patient Identifiers](#)

II. Policy

The UTMB Health employees responsible for registering patients for inpatient, outpatient ambulatory or emergency care should ensure that [patient identifiers](#) and [demographics](#) are updated as needed.

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

Any updates or corrections to [patient identifiers](#) must be entered into the Enterprise Master Patient Index (EMPI) as soon as possible. However, changing [active patient](#) identifiers must be done with caution. If any patient identifier 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.

III. Procedures

Any name assigned to a patient should remain in the EMPI to allow for the necessary cross-referencing to the unique [MRN](#) and any associated medical information.

Any change to a patient's sex, date of birth and/or [MRN](#) 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 legal name to a fictitious name ([Attachment A](#))
- How to change a patient's name, sex and/or date of birth ([Attachment B](#))
- How to correct a patient's MRN when a patient has more than one MRN ([Attachment C](#))

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- How to correct a patient's identifiers and separate medical record information when a patient has been registered/admitted with another patient's MRN ([Attachment D](#))

IV. Definitions

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

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

Medical Record Number (MRN): Previously known as the Unit History number (UH#)
A six digit number with an alpha suffix assigned to UTMB Health patients (not specimens) during their first visit to UTMB Health. Each patient is to receive one number and this number is to be used each time the patient has an encounter with UTMB Health.

Patient Demographics: – Includes address, race, phone number, social security number, and preferred language, place of birth, mother's name, & mother's maiden name.

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

V. Related UTMB Policies and Procedures

[IHOP Policy 9.02.21 Medical Record Number Assignment](#)

[IHOP Policy 9.03.13 Patients' Rights and Responsibilities](#)

VI. Dates Approved or Amended

<i>Originated: 9/26/1997</i>	
<i>Reviewed with Changes</i>	<i>Reviewed without Changes</i>
8/12/2015	7/24/2012
	10/9/2015