### Proper Handling & Disclosure of Protected Health Information (PHI)

#### Handling of paper PHI:
- **Such as,**
  - Discharge paperwork
  - Summary visit notes
  - Prescriptions

#### Before handing patients their copies of PHI:
- Check all pages of PHI to ensure you are giving the correct patient the correct documents
- Before handing the PHI to the patient, verify their identity:
  - Ask patient for their full name
  - Ask patient for Date of Birth
  - Ask patient for their address

**Never give the patient the above information, have the patient give it to you!**

#### Faxing and Mailing PHI
- **FAX**
- **Mail**

#### When faxing or mailing PHI documents, you should always:
- Confirm the fax number or address to which you are sending the information
- Check all pages of PHI to ensure you are faxing or mailing the correct documents on the correct patient
- All employees must complete and include the coversheet when faxing and mailing PHI (Protected Health Information Coversheet Required for Fax Transmission, interoffice mail, US Mail & Other Mail)
- DPH Secured Delivery of PHI policy must be followed

#### Traveling with PHI:

#### You should never take printed material containing PHI off campus without a specific business need
- If you are transporting PHI (such as lab specimens or medical records) to another department or campus, ensure the PHI is secure and **with you at all times**.
- You should always take steps to safeguard paper PHI (such as patient lab forms) to prevent others from viewing the documents.
- **Never leave items that contain PHI unattended** (e.g., in your car while you run an errand), such as your scheduling book, your hand-written notes, or your laptop. Don’t leave them alone...not for one moment!

#### Verbal Disclosure of Patient Information:

#### When entering a patient room, remember:
- Whenever possible, allow the patient to determine which family members or others involved in their care can stay in the room when communicating the patient’s care and services
- **Do not** assume that the patient’s family or visitors are aware of the patient’s health situation
- **Do not** speak openly to the patient in the presence of others without the patient’s verbal consent
- **Never** discuss patient information in a public area (such as hallways and elevators)

#### Report a Privacy Breach:
- **Office of Compliance and Privacy Affairs**
  - Call: Toll-Free 855-729-6040
  - Email: compliance.privacy@sfdph.org

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