
DISCLOSURE/RELEASE OF PATIENT HEALTH INFORMATION

The Medical Center is committed to ensuring the privacy and security of patient health information and shall ensure that appropriate steps are taken to request, use or disclose/release health information in accordance with our privacy and security policies and applicable laws.

The use and disclosure/release of health information is only for a legitimate reason and is limited to the minimum amount needed to perform a specific type of work or to complete a function.

In a situation where privacy and security laws have been violated internal to the Medical Center, the employees, volunteers, students, physicians and business associates can disclose/release health information without fear of retaliation.

If, at any time, the staff feels that release of health information could cause substantial harm and or endanger the life or safety of the patient or another individual, contact the attending physician or designee for guidance.

Upon receiving patient's permission, the staff may release general information about the condition of the patient as noted below:

One-Word Condition	Definition
Undetermined	<i>The patient is awaiting physician assessment</i>
Good	<i>Vital signs are stable and within normal limits; patient is conscious and comfortable; indicators are excellent</i>
Fair	<i>Vital signs are stable and within normal limits; patient is conscious, but may be uncomfortable; indicators are favorable</i>
Serious	<i>Vital signs may be unstable and not within normal limits. Patient is acutely ill. Indicators are questionable</i>
Critical	<i>Vital signs are unstable and not within normal limits. Patient may be unconscious. Indicators are unfavorable.</i>

From the Guidelines for Releasing Information on the Condition of Patients by the American Hospital Association