



SUGGESTED PROCESS FOR OBTAINING AUTHORIZATIONS

1. Patients must sign authorizations to participate in the I-Care program. As part of the registration process, ask the patient if they are aware of the I-Care program, and whether or not they have signed an authorization to release patient information.
2. First determine if the patient is eligible to participate. Your supervisor will give you a list but generally those eligible to participate include self-pay, charity care, sliding fee, County Indigent, Medicaid, CHIP, MAP, and FQHC.
3. If they state an authorization has been signed, you can verify this by accessing their I-Care health record via the Internet. If you can access it, this means they have signed an authorization (either through another hospital or clinic). Bear in mind, it can take anywhere from 24 hours to 30 days for a signed authorization to register in the I-Care system, depending upon the health provider from which it came.
4. If an authorization has not been signed and activated in the I-Care system, offer the patient an I-Care authorization form (available in both English and Spanish) to sign. Explain that the major health care providers in the central Texas area have launched this program so they can provide better care at lower cost to patients by sharing health information, and developing group strategies to work more effectively with patients in developing coordinated care. Tell them that the program will only work to make more and better care available if most patients agree to participate.
5. The authorization is valid for a period of two years, so if the patient has signed an authorization in the past, check to be sure the expiration date is not coming up soon. Some organizations have opted to simply have the patient sign the form upon each admission, along with the other standard admission forms; in this case there is no need to keep track of expiration dates.
6. Explain that they must sign the form to participate in the I-Care program.
7. If they have additional questions, offer them the "Q&A" sheet to read or review.
8. If they refuse to sign, thank them for thinking about it, and continue with the rest of the registration process.

If a patient has previously signed an authorization, this means that there should be health information in the system that is available to your clinicians. This should be communicated immediately to the person(s) who are authorized to view I-Care clinical data.

HOW THE FLAG SYSTEM WORKS:

A computer-based flag system will tell each provider whether the patient has authorized sharing of data. The system will be set to a "default" reading of "no" for each patient. As soon as the patient signs the authorization form, the flag should be reset to "yes" with the date entered. If a patient revokes their authorization, the flag needs to be reset to **"no"** with the termination date entered.

PROCEDURE FOR REVOKING AUTHORIZATION:

Once a patient signs an authorization and later changes his or her mind, he or she must revoke the authorization in writing. The Revocation Form is used for this purpose, and is forwarded to the ICC for processing.