


Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness Center		
TITLE: Legibility of Medical Record Documentation	REFERENCE #: MR-14	PAGE: 1
DIVISION: Inpatient/Outpatient- Medical Records	CMS: 482.24(c)(1) TJC: RC.01.04.01	
APPROVED BY:  REY M. VEGA, DIRECTOR	EFFECTIVE: 8/11/2013	REVISED:

**POLICY:**

- A. This policy is applicable to all documentation/entries within the medical record.
- B. All entries in the medical record shall be legible, authenticated, timed and dated.
- C. GBHWC shall monitor compliance with legibility standards as part of its performance improvement and medical error reduction activities.
- D. All medical entries must be clearly written in such a way that they are not likely to be misread or misinterpreted.
- E. All entries in the medical record shall be legible to all individuals.
- F. All physicians shall write physician orders legibly.
- G. Abbreviations listed on the GBHWC Unacceptable Abbreviation and Symbol List (F-MR-10) will not be allowed in the medical record documentation.

**PROCEDURE:**

- A. All entries must be typed or handwritten using only black or blue ink.
- B. If an entry cannot be read, the author shall rewrite the entry on the next available line/space, define what the entry is for by referring back to the original documentation, and legibly rewrite the entry.
  - a. Example: "Clarification entry for (date)" and rewrite entry, date, time, and sign.
  - b. All illegible entries that are rewritten must contain the exact same content as the original entry.
  - c. If the illegible entry was hand written it may be typed and printed, as long as it contains the exact same content as the original entry.
- C. If a physician writes an order (i.e., medication order, admission order) that is not legible, the order must be clarified with the physician prior to implementation.
  - a. Clarification of orders will be documented on the order sheet as a "clarification", timed and dated and signed by the staff receiving the clarification.

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- b. Failure to clarify an illegible order will result in employee counseling and possible progressive disciplinary action.
  
- D. Legibility will be monitored via concurrent and retrospective medical record reviews:
  - a. Unresolved legibility issues will be forwarded to the staffs' respective supervisor.

**REFERENCES:**

1. GBHWC Unacceptable Abbreviation and Symbol List (F-MR-10)