Resource and Patient Management System
Patient Merge Policy

Purpose

To ensure patient records are complete and accurate by using the Patient Merge package of the Resource Patient Management System (RPMS) to identify and verify potential duplicate records and to merge verified duplicate records.

Policy

All Indian Health Service (IHS) facilities are required to train specific staff in the use of the Patient Merge application (namespace BPM) prior to installing the software. Staff responsible for merging duplicate patients shall have a thorough understanding that records cannot be unmerged. Because merging cannot be undone, the patient merge process demands accuracy by staff.

Procedure

It is highly recommended that Health Information Management (HIM) staff and Patient Registration, where applicable, be trained in the use of the package. It is critical for sites to understand that there is a no unmerge function within this package; therefore, the criticality of completing training and being accurate in identifying, verifying, and merging electronic data cannot be overstated.

Consequently, it is recommended that sites have at least two users:

- User one is responsible for the identification and verification processes.

- User two is responsible for the actual merging of the visits.

Since HIM is the custodian of the record/data it is highly recommended that HIM Supervisors be accountable for patient merge processes within IHS facilities.

Sites are strongly encouraged to develop specific procedures to ensure the accurate merging of duplicate records.

Responsibility

HIM Supervisor, HIM staff and/or Patient Registration.

Reference: Patient Merge Manual

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