DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS **Policy Memorandum 136-12-30**
South Texas Veterans Health Care System
San Antonio, Texas 78229-4404 **September 24, 2012**

COMPLETION OF MEDICAL RECORDS

1. PURPOSE: To establish policy regarding the processing and completion of medical records at the South Texas Veterans Health Care System (STVHCS). This policy pertains primarily to those stages of medical records processing and completion for which physicians and other providers of care are responsible. It also prescribes policy that must be adhered to by other STVHCS staff involved with the medical record.

2. POLICY: A medical record will be established for every person treated at this facility or at the expense of this agency, regardless of beneficiary status. Medical Records will be accurate and complete in accordance with The Joint Commission (TJC), Current Edition, and Medical Center standards. Medical records will be documented accurately, in a timely manner, and electronic whenever possible; will be readily accessible; and will permit prompt retrieval of patient information. All medical record entries will be legible.

a. **The document requirements are as follows**:

(1) **Signatures**.

(a) All electronic signatures must meet TJC standards and have the following elements (CPRS meets these requirements):

1. Electronically signed by
2. Date
3. Time
4. Signers full name and credential or functional title as assigned by service

(c) All documentation including electronic format must be signed/cosigned according to STVHCS Bylaws and Rules of the Medical Staff.

(d) Documentation not signed/cosigned within 30 days from date of entry (or earlier as established by policy or STVHCS Bylawsand Rules of the Medical Staff) will be considered delinquent.

(e) Any electronic or paper documents not signed/co-signed within 60 days from the time of entry will be forwarded to the Medical Records Committee for consideration of administrative completion.

1. Documents approved for Administrative Completion will immediately be forwarded to Chief, HIMS for facilitation of deficiency closure.

2. An addendum will be added to the report indicating approval for administrative closure by the Medical Records Committee referencing the date of the approval in the meeting minutes.

3. The document will be administratively closed with the date of MRC approval minutes referenced.

(1) **Consolidated Health Record (CHR).** The CHR reflects the skills utilized by both professional and administrative specialties throughout the patient's period of health care. The official and legal medical records is the Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS) including VistA Imaging for documents that cannot be entered electronically . Wherever possible clinical, professional, and administrative staff authorized to make entries in the health record are encouraged to use the electronic system to ensure continuity of care. The CHR can be called the medical record, the patient record, the health record, and the

i. **All electronic reports** will be uploaded into the VistA system on regular intervals during the day. The incomplete record tracking system will be updated to reflect the status of all reports that are being tracked.

j. **Electronic signatures** are appropriate for use and are secured by unique access and verify codes and all staff must acknowledge their understanding of the secure nature of these codes and their appropriate use.

4. REFERENCES: VHA Handbook 1907.1 dated April 15, 2004 and TJC, Current Edition

5. RESPONSIBILITY: Chief, Medical Administration Service (136)

6. RESCISSIONS: STVHCS Policy Memorandum 136-10-30 dated July 29, 2010

7. RECERTIFICATION: September 2017

(Original signature on file)

MARIE L. WELDON, FACHE
Director

DISTRIBUTION: B