Confidentiality of Peer Review Information Policy – SAMPLE

Subject: Confidentiality of Peer Review Information Policy
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I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:
To describe the mechanisms whereby documents prepared for or generated by peer review and patient safety activities are confidentially maintained.

II. STATEMENT OF POLICY:
Peer review committee minutes, reports, worksheets, and other data are CONFIDENTIAL documents prepared pursuant to [insert relevant state statutes here] solely for the peer/professional review function, including the reduction of morbidity and mortality within the facility. These documents shall not be duplicated or made available to anyone without the authority of the committee which generated the document or for which the document was prepared. Peer review information is increasingly being managed in electronic formats. These electronic files must have the same restricted access and protections as the paper record.

III. PROCEDURE:
A. Information collected for or generated by committees related to the review and analysis of professional practice shall be subject to control measures to ensure confidentiality. Those documents include, but are not limited to, memoranda, meeting minutes, correspondence, statistical and other reports, and additional tools used to gather data such as worksheets. Safeguards to ensure confidentiality of documents include the following.
   i. Patients and physicians shall be identified by code number only.
   ii. Documents reproduced and circulated at meetings are for use only during the meeting and shall be collected at the end of each session and destroyed. Each document is numbered to ensure that each document is retrieved at the end of the meeting.
   iii. Original documents shall be maintained in a secure location.
   iv. Access shall be limited to the peer review process and shall be for committee use only.
   v. Disclosure shall be made only with the authorization of the peer review committee for which the information was collected.
   vi. Strict access and control of all peer review documents should be maintained.
   vii. Records related to committee professional review activity, such as reports, meeting minutes, and memoranda, will be identified as records subject to statutory confidentiality provisions.
   viii. Peer review confidentiality also explicitly prohibits discussions outside of the meeting and or with other physician’s not involved in the peer review.

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