Secure Scanning of Prescriptions and Lab Results Policy

Effective Date: 08/15/2025

Approved By: Director of Medical and Clinical Services

Review Schedule: Annually or as Needed

Applies To: All Programs — Outpatient MH/SUD, IOP, PHP, and Integrated Primary Care/Behavioral Health

I. Purpose

To ensure all prescription and laboratory result documents are securely transmitted, received, and stored in client health records in accordance with CARF §2.F (Medication Management), CARF §1.M (Performance Measurement and Privacy), and HIPAA / 42 CFR Part 2 privacy and security requirements.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all prescribers, medical assistants, nursing staff, and administrative personnel responsible for prescription processing, laboratory coordination, or document management at all REACH for Tomorrow sites.

III. Policy Statement

All prescriptions at REACH for Tomorrow are issued electronically through electronic prescribing of controlled substances (EPCS) systems integrated with the BestNotes EHR. In the event of an internet or power outage, temporary paper prescriptions may be used and must be scanned and uploaded to the EHR once systems are restored. All laboratory results are received via a secure, HIPAA-compliant fax line, verified for accuracy, and promptly uploaded to the correct client chart.

IV. Procedures

A. Electronic Prescribing (EPCS)

1. All prescriptions are to be sent electronically through the BestNotes EPCS module using two-factor authentication (password and authentication token).
2. The prescriber must ensure accuracy of the medication name, dosage, frequency, and pharmacy destination prior to submission.
3. Electronic prescription data are automatically stored and backed up in the EHR under the medication history tab.

B. Contingency: Paper Prescriptions During System Outage

1. Paper prescriptions may be issued only in the event of a documented power or internet outage.
2. The prescriber must use pre-numbered, secure prescription pads stored in a locked cabinet accessible only to authorized providers.
3. Each paper prescription shall include:
   - Prescriber signature and DEA number (if applicable)
   - Date, client name, and medication details
   - Notation “Issued during EPCS outage”
4. Once the system is restored:
   - Staff shall scan the prescription into the client’s EHR chart under the “Medication” or “Prescriptions” tab.
   - The original paper prescription shall be marked “SCANNED” with the date and filed in a locked administrative records cabinet for 90 days before shredding per retention policy.

C. Laboratory Result Management

1. All lab results are received via a dedicated secure fax line connected to an encrypted fax server.
2. The receiving staff verifies:
   - Client identifiers (name, DOB, MRN)
   - Ordering provider and date
   - Completeness of all result pages
3. Verified results are scanned and uploaded to the client’s chart in BestNotes under “Labs/Diagnostics.”
4. The provider or medical assistant must document review and follow-up within 48 hours of receipt.
5. The Director of Medical and Clinical Services (DMCS) or designee performs monthly random audits to confirm timely upload and documentation.

D. Integration with Electronic Health Record (EHR)

1. REACH for Tomorrow is actively working toward direct laboratory interface integration with BestNotes to allow automated electronic result import and verification.
2. Once implemented, lab results will be automatically linked to client charts and flagged for prescriber review.
3. Manual fax and scan processes will continue until full integration is operational and validated.

E. Security and Confidentiality

- All scanned documents are stored within encrypted, access-controlled EHR folders.
- Access is limited to authorized medical and clinical staff with role-based permissions.
- Transmission, scanning, and fax operations must comply with HIPAA, 42 CFR Part 2, and CARF §1.M standards for confidentiality and data integrity.

V. Quality Monitoring

- Monthly audit of scanned prescriptions and lab results will be conducted to ensure timely and accurate chart upload.
- Discrepancies or delays are reported to the Medication Management Committee and included in quarterly QI reports.
- The DMCS oversees corrective actions and verifies completion.