

# THE NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE HOSPITALS NHS TRUST

## ARCHIVING AND/OR DESTRUCTION OF CASENOTES

### OPERATIONAL POLICY

Effective February 2005

Review February 2008

#### **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In order to address the on-going storage problem within the Hospital sites, casenotes are scanned, using an external bureau and then transferred via a CDROM to a secure Storage Area Network (SAN).
- 1.2 The function is managed by the Trust Medical Records/Out-patients Manager or Deputy. The Library Manager in the casenote management section will supervise the clerical staff responsible for the day-to-day operation and maintenance of the system.

#### **2 ARCHIVING PROCESS**

- 2.1 Casenotes will be identified for archiving as follows:
  - a) Casenotes of deceased adult patients will be scanned onto CDROM three years following death. Paediatric and mental health notes will be retained in scanned format for twenty five years.
  - b) Casenotes of live patients who have not attended the relevant hospital within the preceding three years.
- 2.2 The documents will then be scanned by a bureau service in sequence and the resulting CD processed.
- 2.3 An index list of the scanned casenotes contained on the CD will be produced by the contractor and utilised to update the Patient Administration System (PAS) and to validate the details on the list.
- 2.4 Once validation of the data is confirmed, the CD will be produced and returned to the Trust to be imported onto the SAN using specialist software.
- 2.5 The SAN is mirrored on two servers to ensure data is always available.
- 2.6 Further duplicate CDs can be produced if required.

#### **3 DESTRUCTION OF CASENOTES**

During an indexing process, strict verification procedures will be undertaken to ensure the archived images are complete and of good quality. Destruction of casenotes will then be carried out by the external bureau in accordance with Trust policy and within the legal requirements of the HSC 1999/53.

#### **4 STORAGE OF CDs**

4.1 The original CD will be stored in security cabinets for further back-up if required.

#### **5 RETRIEVAL OF DOCUMENTS/INFORMATION**

5.1 If required, casenotes that have been scanned can either:

- a) Be viewed on PCs located in the relevant department that has the appropriate software. This facility is expected to be utilised for research purposes when only limited amounts of information are required.
- b) Be re-produced in paper form using the PC and printer sited in the relevant Medical Records Department. Only essential documents will be re-produced in paper form so as to avoid unnecessary increase in the volume of paper stored.

5.2 All requests to view/re-produce documents must be directed through the appropriate personnel in the relevant Medical Records Department.

5.3 Senior portering staff at Freeman/RVI will be trained in the use of the equipment to facilitate "out of hours" access to information that may be required for emergency cases only.

**Approved by: Mrs E Hogarth  
Medical Records/Out-patients Manager**