Charting and Documenting from A Legal and Clinical Perspective

Stephanie Hogue, BSN, RN
Legal Nurse Analyst

Charting and Documenting from a Legal and Clinical Perspective

Back to Basics
Clinical

Charting and Documenting from a Legal and Clinical Perspective

- Nursing Process
  - Assessment
  - Diagnosis
  - Planning
  - Intervention
  - Evaluation
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- Professional Capability

  - Nurse Practice Act

  www.abn.state.al.us

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Facility Policy and Procedure Manual

- overwhelming
- use as a reference
- unfamiliar situations

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The Legal Side

The medical chart is a legal document.
In law, **spoliation of evidence** is the intentional or negligent withholding, hiding, altering, or destroying of evidence relevant to a legal proceeding.


The medical chart is the best defense.

**Best Practices**

- Make it a habit...
- Encourage and check behind...
- Educate and correct...
- Reinforce good examples...
**Charting and Documenting from a Legal and Clinical Perspective**

**SIMPLE STEPS**

* Have the correct chart before you begin

* Chart only within your professional capability

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**SIMPLE STEPS, continued**

* WRITE LEGIBLY!!!

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**SIMPLE STEPS, continued**

All Entries need to have:

- time (include AM or PM)
- intervention/assessment
- resident response
SIMPLE STEPS, continued

~Chart any precautions or preventive measures used
~Chart care when it is provided

Late Entries
- must show date and time the late entry is recorded AND mention when the actual event/intervention occurred

-dislike ☹

REVIEW
-Check for errors
-Make sure you’ve been thorough
-Enough documentation to tell the story
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Thou Shalt NOTs

DO NOT EVER ALTER A RESIDENT’S RECORD
**THOU SHALT NOTs**

*Do not chart what someone else says, reports, smells, feels, tastes, etc...  

*IF it is critical to the situation, document and use quotations appropriately.

**THOU SHALT NOTs**

*No shorthand  
*Use only accepted abbreviations

**THOU SHALT NOTs**

-Do not chart feelings or assumptions.  
-Stay objective.  
-Avoid words like “feel”, “believe” and “appears”.
THOU SHALT NOTs

---Do not chart ahead of time
---Can be considered fraud

THOU SHALT NOTs

Use measurable descriptions such as milliliters, inches, pounds, centimeters, etc...
Avoid imprecise descriptions such as “bed-soaked” or “a lot”

THOU SHALT NOTs

Avoid charting a symptom or problem without charting an intervention or action.
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FOCUS

Sign everything!!!

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Keep chronological notes in order...

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Computerized Charting

The Good
The Bad
The Ugly
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Stephanie Hogue, BSN, RN
Johnston Barton Proctor & Rose
sah@johnstonbarton.com
205-214-7271