



## C I R C U L A R

### AST/ P & C /F112(clinical photographs-guidelines)/2012-13, Dt.01.05.2012

Sub: Aarogyasri Health Scheme – Guidelines on clinical photographs – Reg.

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It is observed that the network hospitals were failing to upload clinical photographs or uploading non-relevant photographs in the pre-authorisation and claim attachments. In order to streamline the process of obtaining clinical photographs, the following detailed guidelines recommended by Empanelment and Disciplinary Committee and approved by the CEO are furnished below.

#### **Background:**

Trust defined the approval protocols for Aarogyasri procedures in consultation with specialists. The approval protocols included clinical photograph also. The detailed online documentation for pre-authorisation and claims included investigation reports, imageology evidences and clinical photographs to make the approvals transparent and foolproof. All the network hospitals were appraised the protocols since introduction of online approval system in the scheme. Hence, the photographic evidence in the form of clinical photograph was there right from the online implementation and formed part of evidence based approval along with other documentation.

It may be noted that clinical photograph in terms of standard medical practices indicates a photograph taken for clinical purposes and needs to depict the lesion, the procedure and the outcome, hence differs from a routine photograph. The same is applied in the scheme and hospitals were expected to upload clinical photographs as per the above stages to facilitate approvals under the scheme.

It was found that the hospitals were uploading non relevant photographs viz., photograph showing the face without capturing lesion or the outcome. Therefore the hospitals were requested to submit the clinical photographs in accordance with the scheme guidelines and requirements. This was indicated to the hospitals

- i) By providing separate facility to upload relevant photographs in the online attachments (Intra operative photograph, Scar photo, Photo at discharge, Post operative photograph etc.,)
- ii) By insisting on video evidence in case of endoscopic procedures and creating webex format to facilitate the same.
- iii) By way of pending notes while processing pre-authorisation and claims.
- iv) By detailing the online procedure during the training sessions.

Hospitals have expressed certain concerns with regards to these clinical photographs and requested the Trust to give more clarity so as to get the proper approvals of pre-authorisation and claims.

**Guidelines:**

In view of the above, the following guidelines are issued to the network hospitals for clarity with regards to clinical photographs. The Trust while framing these guidelines has taken into consideration the desirability, practicability and confidentiality of the patient.

- i) All clinical photographs shall be taken with digital camera clearly depicting the lesion.
- ii) These photographs can be divided into three groups.
  - a. Pre-operative photograph showing the lesion wherever indicated in the manual.
  - b. Intra-operative photographs as detailed at point (iv).
  - c. Post-operative scar photo.
- iii) All endoscopic procedures must be video recorded and uploaded in entirety starting with face and position of the patient in the theatre to the revival of the patient from anaesthesia or completion of the procedure.
- iv) Still photographs clearly depicting the following stages in the surgery shall be uploaded for pre-authorisation and claims under intra-operative photographs for open procedures.
  - a. Photograph clearly depicting the face of the patient lying on the operation table.
  - b. 2 to 3 photographs showing the critical steps of the procedure while being operated.
  - c. Photograph of the suture line at the end of the procedure wherever external sutures are applied.
- v) Hospital shall take due care while taking the photograph to have the clarity of the lesion or procedure, not to hurt the modesty of the patient.
- vi) Hospital shall take due care and shall hold the responsibility and to protect the confidentiality of the patient while handling these photographs.

All the network hospitals are requested to follow these guidelines scrupulously while submitting pre-authorisation and claims to avoid delay or rejection on account of this.

  
Chief Executive Officer

To  
The MDs/CMDs/CEOs/Superintendents of all Network Hospitals.  
The General Manager (FOSS), Aarogyasri Health Care Trust.  
AGM (PMU), Aarogyasri Health Care Trust.