Appendix D
Sample Deletion/Retraction Policy

Making Deletions/Retractions within the Health Record

PURPOSE: The purpose of the health record is to provide a basis for planning patient care and for the continuity of such care. Each record should provide documentary evidence of the patient's medical evaluation, treatment, and change in condition as appropriate. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the instances in which a deletion or retraction of information is necessary to support the integrity of the health record.

POLICY: Providers documenting within the EHR must avoid indiscriminate use of deletion and retraction functionality as a means of documentation. All attempts to correctly identify patients and their medical conditions should be made prior to documenting within the record.

Note: Deletion or retraction of information should never occur if the record is a part of any ongoing litigation.

(ADD IF APPROPRIATE FOR THE ORGANIZATION: The total elimination of information/documentation after final signature should never occur. For instances in which the deletion function is utilized to this end, prior approval/notification must be obtained.)

DEFINITIONS:
A deletion is the action of ***eliminating information*** from a signed document without substituting new information.

A retraction is the action of ***correcting information that was incorrect, invalid, or made in error*** to a signed document. (INSERT APPLICABLE STATE LAW AS REFERENCE)

PROCEDURE:
PROVIDER:
1. Identify erroneous information
2. Contact (INSERT APPROPRIATE DEPARTMENT NAME) and identify erroneous information as well as correct information

DEPARTMENT (INSERT DEPARTMENT NAME):
1. Locate appropriate record.
2. Verify patient.
3. Determine if record is involved in litigation. If record is involved in litigation, refer request to risk management department.

4. Compare provider request of erroneous documentation to corrected documentation.
5. Apply appropriate changes in documentation to the host system as well as any long term storage systems, if appropriate.
6. Maintain request for deletion/retraction.
7. Report trends to (INSERT ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITTEE).