



# Network System User Agreement

## I. General Considerations

The Scott & White network system makes accessible to authorized users a broad range of electronically stored medical information about patients, external medical data references such as textbooks, and Scott & White administrative matters. It also provides access to the Internet. The system can be thought of as an electronic digital library system, with many libraries from around the world, including ones at Scott & White, being potentially available at the touch of a button. As with most reference libraries, not all information is open to all users. Databases that are restricted to specific authorized users include patient notes, lab results, appointment lists, procedure manuals, practice guides, etc.

In general, authorized users will be allowed access to data present on the Internet. However, Scott & White reserves the right to filter, or limit access to data present on the Internet which it feels inappropriate, or contrary to the Scott & White mission or ethics.

## II. Specific Policies

The following policies are in effect regarding access to the Scott & White network system, and its multiple databases. Note that these policies deal only with individual authorization regarding different types of information present on the network system. Other general access policies, such as whether or not the Scott & White network system can be accessed via modem "dial-up" from the outside, may modify and/or constrain a user's physical

access to data, or to the network itself, irrespective of an individual user's level of authorization regarding access to the data on the network.

1. Authorization for access to internal Scott & White clinical and administrative databases (patient notes, discharge summaries, operative reports, lab results, appointment lists, Scott & White policies, procedures, and guidelines manuals, etc.) is based on specific medical care, administrative, education, and/or research justifications, and requires appropriate departmental endorsement, separate and in addition to clearance for network access.
2. A user's level of authorization regarding access to various Scott & White databases is set at time of user registration, or re-registration, into the network system. Changing a user's level of authorization will require re-registration.
3. Data made available to authorized users may be sensitive or confidential medical information, and must be handled in an appropriate, professional, ethical fashion. Any user who has access to any of the internal clinical or administrative Scott & White databases (see #2 above) must be certain that his/her access to any sensitive or confidential medical information is accomplished in an appropriate, professional, ethical fashion. The user should pose the following question to himself/ herself *each time he/she considers accessing such data*: "If, instead of a computer, I was using paper Scott & White patient chart(s), or a bound Scott & White reference guide, would this specific access to the data contained therein be appropriate? With whom would it be proper to share the data I retrieve?"
4. Each user's access to Scott & White medical data will be recorded electronically, and these logs may be audited by Scott & White on a random basis, or for cause. This procedure is consistent with current policies regarding the paper medical record and chart tracking system at Scott & White. A user's participation in accessing medical data through the network system implies his/her consent to the recording (logging) of all of his/her data accesses, and is an acknowledgement that such logs can be audited by Scott & White on a random basis, or for cause. Furthermore, the user certifies (by accepting a login and password to the system) a willingness to be held accountable for his/her actions in accessing, retrieving, and promulgating (sharing or passing on to others) data. The user thus commits to behaving in an ethical fashion regarding computer-based access to Scott & White data.
5. User access to the Scott & White network system itself will be recorded electronically, and these logs may be audited by Scott & White on a random basis, or for cause. Thus, in addition to logging his/her access to specific databases on the Scott & White network system, a user's participation in accessing the Scott & White network system itself (by using an attached workstation or terminal, or "dialing in" to the network, or using the Scott & White dial-up access to the Internet) implies his/ her consent to the recording (logging) of all such network accesses, and is an acknowledgment that such logs can be audited by Scott & White on a random basis, or for cause. Furthermore, the user certifies (by accepting a login and password to the system) a willingness to be held accountable for his/ her actions in accessing the Scott & White network system.
6. User access to the Scott & White network system is provided solely to support the mission of Scott & White. Network access by users for non-Scott & White related purposes is expressly prohibited.



## Specific Terms of User Access

Accessing and/or retrieving via any means (computer or otherwise), or promulgating (sharing or passing on to others), any type of patient data (clinical, administrative, billing, scheduling, etc.) at Scott & White is permitted for the following purposes only:

1. Acquisition of knowledge to support the care of patients for whom the user has direct care responsibilities, and for which specific acquisition the user has proper authorization.
2. Acquisition of knowledge to document, measure, or evaluate quality of care via accessing individual or aggregate patient data, and for which specific acquisition the user has proper authorization.
3. Acquisition of knowledge to document, measure, or evaluate institutional practice patterns or other administrative aspects of healthcare delivered at Scott & White via accessing individual or aggregate patient data, and for which specific acquisition the user has proper authorization.
4. Acquisition of knowledge for well-defined activities of research and/or education via accessing individual or aggregate patient data, and for which specific acquisition the user has proper authorization.

Accessing and/or retrieving via any means (computer or otherwise), or promulgating (sharing or passing on to others), any type of patient data (medical, administrative, billing, scheduling, etc.) at Scott & White for any other reason, or without proper authorization, is grounds for immediate dismissal from Scott & White employment and/or educational programs.

It is unethical for any user to share or give his/her password to another individual, or fail to take appropriate measures to safeguard its secrecy, since by doing so the user relinquishes control of entrusted data.

Any prospective user finding the terms and policies set forth above unacceptable should not accept access privileges to the Scott & White network system.

### **User Endorsement**

I have read and understood the policies described on both pages of this user agreement, and will comply with them to the best of my ability. I realize that authorization to access data via the Scott & White network system is contingent on continued employment or educational relationship with Scott & White, and that all access is to be accomplished solely for activities related to Scott & White, and with proper authorization.

**Name (printed):**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_

**Date:**