PURPOSE: The purpose of the Billing Compliance Plan (hereto referred to as “Plan”) is to implement a Billing Compliance Program (BCP) to provide a framework for effective billing compliance. The Plan encompasses the clinical billing activities within the Schools of Medicine, School of Nursing, School of Pharmacy and School of Allied Health Sciences at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) for the Lubbock, Amarillo and Odessa campuses.

REVIEW: This HSC Operating Procedure (OP) will be reviewed on June 1 of each even-numbered year (ENY) by the Institutional Compliance Officer (ICO) and/or Managing Director of Compliance, and each campus’ Billing Compliance Advisory Committees (BCAC). Finalized OP will be forwarded to the Institutional Compliance Working Committee (ICWC) for approval by September 1.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE:

1. Defined Terms

The following terms are defined for purposes of this HSC OP:

a. Employees are Faculty, Residents, and Staff who receive W-2 wages from TTUHSC who provide health care services/items, and/or participate in health care operations, including, but not limited to administrative support, preparation of health care claims, billing of health care items/services or similar activities.

b. Agents are individuals and entities that have contracted with TTUHSC to provide health care services/items or otherwise participate in health care operations, including, but not limited to administrative support, preparation of clinical claims, billing of health care items/services or similar activities.

c. Providers are Employees and Agents of the TTUHSC School of Medicine, School of Nursing, School of Allied Health Sciences, or School of Pharmacy who engage or participate in the provision of health care services/items billed under a TTUHSC Federal Tax Identification Number. This term includes (but is not limited to) Physicians, Advanced Practice Nurses, Physicians’ Assistants, Speech-Language Pathologists, Audiologists, Clinical Pharmacists, and Clinical Psychologists. This term excludes Residents.

d. Residents are individuals who participate in a TTUHSC-approved graduate medical education (GME) program. This term includes Interns and Fellows in GME programs recognized as approved for purposes of direct GME payments made by a Medicare Contractor.

e. Fraud has the same meaning as contained in TTUS Regents’ Rule 07.03, Fraud Policy.

f. Violation of Law means failure or refusal to follow any applicable state or federal law such that criminal and/or civil penalties may be imposed.

g. Non-compliance means failure or refusal to follow applicable state or federal laws or institutional policies whether or not such conduct results in financial risk to TTUHSC. It can include acts that constitute fraud, violations-of-law, or failure to comply with the Plan or related policies and procedures.
h. **Proxy** refers to a physician participant, appointed and approved in advance, to function as the designated BCAC member’s representative to be utilized in instances where the BCAC member is unable to attend the BCAC function.

i. **BCAC** – Regional Billing Compliance Advisory Committee at each campus as applicable.

j. **BCO** – Regional Billing Compliance Officer at each campus as applicable.

k. **ICO** – Institutional Compliance Officer

l. **BCP** – Billing Compliance Program

m. **ICC** – Institutional Compliance Committee, i.e., TTUHSC President’s Executive Council

n. **ICWC** - Institutional Compliance Working Committee; appointed by the TTUHSC ICC

o. **Director** – Managing Director of Compliance for Lubbock, Odessa and Amarillo campuses

2. **Billing Compliance Oversight**

**Billing Compliance Staff.** Each School shall provide adequate resources and authority to the Institutional Compliance Officer (ICO) to implement an effective BCP.

**Institutional Compliance Officer (ICO).** The ICO shall report to the Institutional Compliance Working Committee (ICWC) and Institutional Compliance Committee (ICC) on the implementation and effectiveness of the BCP. Specific duties and responsibilities of the ICO shall be outlined in billing compliance policies and procedures.

**Managing Director of Compliance (Director).** The Director is responsible for billing compliance functions at the Lubbock, Amarillo and Odessa campuses and reports to the ICO.

**Regional Billing Compliance Directors/Officers (BCOs).** The BCOs shall be responsible for billing compliance oversight at their respective campus. Specific duties and responsibilities of the BCOs (and their staff as applicable) shall be outlined in billing compliance policies and procedures.

**Regional Billing Compliance Advisory Committees (BCAC).** Billing Compliance oversight for the TTUHSC Schools of Medicine, Nursing, Health Professions and Pharmacy on each regional campus as applicable shall be provided by a Regional Billing Compliance Advisory Committee (BCAC). The BCAC, and any subcommittees or workgroups established by the BCAC, shall each be considered a “medical committee” as defined under Texas Health and Safety Code §161.031(a), and/or other applicable state and federal laws. All documents generated by the BCAC, submitted to the BCAC or created for the purposes of fulfilling the BCAC’s duties under TTUHSC’s BCP are confidential and privileged and shall be identified as a “Confidential – Medical Committee Document”.

1) **Membership.** The Schools of Medicine Deans and Regional Deans shall appoint members to the BCAC at their respective campuses as applicable, to include, at a minimum the following:
   - the Dean/Regional Dean or his/her designee,
   - the Regional Medical Practice Income Plan (MPIP) Director or his/her designee,
   - the Medical Records Manager and/or a representative from Electronic Health Record/Electronic Medical Record (ex-officio), and
   - other individuals based on recommendations from the BCO.

Each Regional BCO and at least one Billing Compliance Analyst (as applicable) shall be ex-officio members of their respective BCAC. BCAC membership may vary between campuses.
2) **Meetings.** The BCAC shall meet quarterly, or more often as necessary to meet its responsibilities under the Plan. The BCO shall chair the meetings. In the BCO’s absence, the Billing Compliance Analyst, the Director or the ICO may serve as chair. The presence of a simple majority of members shall constitute a quorum for purposes of conducting business. If a quorum is not present, the meeting may proceed to provide information, but no business (i.e., voting) may be conducted.

3) **Role and Responsibilities.** Each BCAC is responsible for oversight of the Plan at its regional campus as applicable. Each campus BCAC shall, with respect to billing compliance oversight at its campus:

   a) Receive, at a minimum, quarterly and annual reports from the BCO on the status of the BCP and related activities.
   b) Recommend and/or approve corrective action based on the findings from routine monitoring, risk-based audits, and/or investigations.
   c) Provide guidance to the BCO regarding proposed institutional billing compliance policies and procedures, and on issues not covered under existing policies or requiring the attention of the ICO.
   d) Assist the BCO in identifying risk areas and high risk activities.
   e) Provide support to the BCO in carrying out the various aspects of the BCP, including corrective action.
   f) Verify that appropriate billing compliance education and training has been provided.

3. **Other Billing Compliance Areas**

   a. **Policies & Procedures.** The ICO with input from the Director, BCOs, and BCACs, shall develop, update and maintain billing compliance policies and procedures addressing billing compliance standards, identified risks and operational procedures. The Plan and related policies shall be posted on the TTUHSC Billing Compliance website at [http://www.ttuhsc.edu/billingcompliance/policies_procedures.aspx](http://www.ttuhsc.edu/billingcompliance/policies_procedures.aspx).

   b. **Education and Training.**

   1) Initial and on-going billing compliance education and training programs shall be developed to address fraud, waste and abuse, and identified billing compliance risk areas. General content criteria, frequency, attendance requirements, and completion deadlines for all billing compliance training shall be established by written policy.

   2) The BCOs are responsible for providing initial and on-going billing compliance education to designated providers and staff in the TTUHSC Schools of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy and Health Professions as directed by the ICO and/or as established in written policy.

   3) Records of billing compliance education and training shall be maintained in a format to be determined by policy. Billing compliance education materials (electronic and/or hard copy) shall be retained at least ten (10) years.

   c. **Monitoring/Auditing and Investigations**

   1) **Monitoring/Auditing.**

   Routine monitoring and auditing shall be conducted based on federal documentation guidelines, carrier guidelines, payer standards, and other applicable regulations in accordance with approved billing compliance policies. Monitoring and auditing results shall be reported to each campus BCAC as applicable and the ICWC. Audits shall be conducted based upon identified billing compliance risk areas as determined by the ICO and BCOs and approved by their respective BCAC or the ICWC.
2. Billing Compliance Investigations

a) Internal. The ICO shall plan, initiate, and oversee investigations arising from identified or suspected non-compliant billing activity. The ICO may delegate one or more aspects of the investigation to the BCOs or other individuals. Results of investigations shall be reported to the affected BCAC and to the ICWC.

b) External. Any external investigations related to documentation and/or billing of health care items/services shall be reported to the ICO as soon as possible. Requests for information from external investigators must be reviewed by the ICO and/or General Counsel.

4. Reporting Responsibilities and Resources

a. An Employee or Agent with a good faith belief that any conduct or practice constitutes non-compliance or violates the BCP has a responsibility to report it using one or more of the steps below:

1) Discuss the issue with their immediate supervisor.
2) Discuss the issue with higher level management, such as the Department Administrator, Department Chair, or Dean.
3) Bring the issue to the attention of the regional BCO.
4) Make a confidential and/or anonymous report by:

- Calling the Compliance Hotline toll free at (866) 294-9352 or
- Using the confidential reporting website for TTUHSC at www.ethicspoint.com

Reporting responsibilities, protections for good-faith reporters and resources are further described in HSC OP 52.03, Compliance Hotline and HSC 52.04, Report & TTUHSC Internal Investigation of Alleged Violations, Non-Retaliation.

5. Response and Corrective Action

a. Response to Allegations

Allegations of billing non-compliance shall be investigated under the direction of the ICO. Responses to findings of non-compliance may include, but are not limited to:

- Refunding of health care services/items.
- Mandatory re-education of individuals and/or departments.
- Escalating corrective action as listed below in paragraph b.
- Modification of the Plan, related policies and procedures and/or education materials.

In accordance with HSC OP 52.04, TTUHSC Employees and Agents shall cooperate during any billing compliance investigation and shall not alter or destroy any documentation during the course of any internal or external investigation.

b. Corrective Action and Appeal Rights

Failure or refusal to comply with applicable laws and regulations or with the BCP and related policies may result in corrective action. An Employee’s supervisor, Chair, or Dean may also be subject to corrective action when he/she

(i) directs or approves the Employee’s improper actions;
(ii) is aware of the improper actions and fails to correct them, or
(iii) otherwise fails to exercise appropriate supervision.
Corrective action and appeal rights will be addressed in accordance with existing policies including, but not limited to, each Schools’ Faculty Handbook, the School of Medicine Housestaff Policies and Procedures, HSC OP 70.31, Employee Conduct, Discipline and Separation of Employees, and HSC OP 60.01, Tenure and Promotion Policy.

6. Right to Change Policy

TTUHSC reserves the right to interpret, change, modify, amend or rescind this policy in whole or in part at any time to reflect changes in policy and/or law.