

Whom Does Medical Record Belong to?

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The medical term “Karte” is the German language and simply means a “Card” in German. Since we had learned much about the German medicine primarily before the World War II, the meaning of “Karte” has been naturally turned “Medical record” and all of us, including the Japanese people, have been accepting this technical term. The law does not provide how to write medical record, but what to write. Medical record must be always written precisely and scientifically, however most of us have not been earnest about this job. Prof. Lawrence L Weed of the Vermont University has first developed a more logical medical record system called “Problem Oriented Medical Record (POMR)” based upon the concept of “Problem Oriented System (POS)” in 1968. This system was introduced to Japan in 1973 by Prof. Hinohara and Shibata and the Japanese Medical Association also promoted the spread of this efficient system. The POMR system provides us more logical and scientific information compared with our customary record methods in terms of describing clinical findings, assessments, decisions and plans. Medical record somewhat looked like a memorandum or short note, depending on a physician in charge. Indeed medical record used to be something like physician’s memorandum, but lately became more scientific one thanks to POMR system. More recently, medical record has been shared with all medical staffs including physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dietitians, social workers and so on. Therefore controlling medical record is no more physician’s privilege and basically medical record belongs to patient. We, medical people, are expected to make much effort for our patients in this sense now.