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## Statistical Linkage Key (SLK)

The SLK581 is a 14 character key used by AROC to link patient's episodes of care through their rehabilitation journey. It enables linkage of episodes across settings (inpatient and ambulatory) and upstream to acute, independent of which hospital provided the care. It allows probabilistic matching of records with up to 95% accuracy. (*Probabilistic matching* uses mathematical algorithms to determine the likelihood or probability that two or more records from the same, or different data sets, represent the same person)

It is a unique key developed for each rehabilitation patient and doesn't compromise the de-identified nature of the AROC dataset.

It comprises 14 characters:

- The second, third and fifth letters of the family name or surname
- Second and third letters of the first given name
- Date of birth (ddmmyyyy) and
- Sex (1= male, 2= female)

Once AROC receives your data, AROC will automatically generate the SLK for each episode of rehabilitation care.

### **Guidelines on how to record "letters of name" (*For interest ONLY*)**

The portion of the SLK comprising "letters of name" will be automatically generated by AROC. This section explains how "letters of name" is generated and is for your interest only.

Letters of name is 5 characters \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Letters from the person's Family name/surname should be provided first, followed by letters from the client's First given name. In the first three spaces record the 2nd, 3rd and 5th letters of the person's family name or surname. In the following two spaces record the 2nd and 3rd letters of the person's First given name

For example: If the person's name is Brown, Elizabeth (i.e. surname, first given name) the Letters of name data element should be reported as RONLI.

- If either of the person's names includes non-alphabetic characters—for example hyphens (as in Lee-Archer) apostrophes (as in O'Mara) or blank spaces (as in Eu Jin)—these nonalphabetic characters should be ignored when counting the position of each character.
- Regardless of the length of a person's name, the Letters of name field should always be five characters long. If either the surname or the first given name of the person is not long enough to supply the requested letters (i.e. a surname of less than five letters or a first

name of less than three letters) then substitute the number '2' in the Letters of name field to reflect the missing letters. The placement of a number '2' should always correspond to the same space that the missing letter would have within the five-digit field.

- For example: If a person's name is Farr, Ben then the Letters of name field would be AR2EN because the 2 is substituting for a missing 5th letter of the surname.
- Similarly, if the person's name was Hua, Jo then the Letters of name field would be UA2O2 because the 2s are substituting for the missing 5th letter of the surname and the missing 3rd letter of the First given name.
- If a person's surname is missing altogether, record 2s for all three spaces associated with the family name/surname. Similarly, if the person's first name is missing altogether substitute 2s for the two spaces associated with the first given name.