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HIPAA Regulations

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Posted by [bmaurer123](#) on October 19, 2011 - 04:23PM EDT

Author Specialties: Family Medicine, Rheumatology

The HIPAA law is probably the worst of the government regulations that have come down the pike over the past twenty years. It was directed at physicians who had in the past already been extremely protective of their patients' medical records.

The hypocrisy is that, in this day and age, the medical record is open to review by government agencies, regulatory bodies, review boards, lawyer's subpoenas and insurance companies at a much greater extent than in the past.

The additional burden of HIPAA has created a massive amount of papers, stating their privacy policies, being mailed from banks and credit card companies to millions of their customers. I am sure the amount of money spent on mailings, including paper and postage, runs into billions of dollars. I am also sure that less than one percent of all of these papers ever get read by the recipients, but instead go directly into the trash basket or the shredder.



How do you comply with HIPAA regulations in your office ?

Choose one:

- ☐ No problem
- ☐ With great frustraton
- ☐ NaCE: Not a Covered Entity: NiCE 

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[lasermed1](#)

OBGYN

Posted October 19, 2011 - 05:46PM EDT

My husband had trouble getting information on his deceased aunt's insurance policy because of who was (and was not) listed on the policy. The policy was for her burial!

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[slevenberg](#)

Internal Medicine

Posted October 19, 2011 - 09:26PM EDT

My office threw HIPAA regulations at anything or everything that came our way requesting medical information from our office. Initially, we were very successful in cutting down paperwork. Our privacy statement given to all patients were 6 pages long and clearly stated just how intrusive all these requests for records were and how we handle these requests. All patients had to sign this privacy statement and acknowledge all the different ways their records could be released under regulations.

One very useful letter we still use in the office continues to make the statement on our efforts to control the incessant release requests for medical records...to insure confidentiality:

We respond to all "HIPAA compliant" generic authorizations by demanding the following by our office by a reply form letter:

- patient signed authorization for the specific request (not a generic or photocopy signature for all records)...
- written request for the "actual dates of tx" that are being requested for ...
- written reason for the records being requested...
- written explanation of what happens to the medical records after their use...
- payment amount for our office handling the request, to be paid in advance...

This reply letter ends withall inquiries to the above is requested in writing (no phone calls!) to insure proper chart documentation of any request of this nature.

HIPAA puts the burden on physicians to insure confidentiality! My office take this very seriously. Patients appreciate this. Lawyers do not. I repeat: Lawyers do not. We no longer handle "expedited" requests as well to insure we remain HIPAA compliant. You ought to see the response we get when we refuse phone calls on expedited requests.

Of course, there are certain state and federal agencies that are exempt from HIPAA...in that regard we request written documentation citing the exemption and additional time for our office to review such documentation to insure that the HIPAA statutes are not violated. Under HIPAA it is still your obligation to insure that the HIPAA statutes are not violated even when exemptions are claimed by others.

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[midwestpsych](#)

Psychiatry

Updated October 20, 2011 - 01:53PM EDT

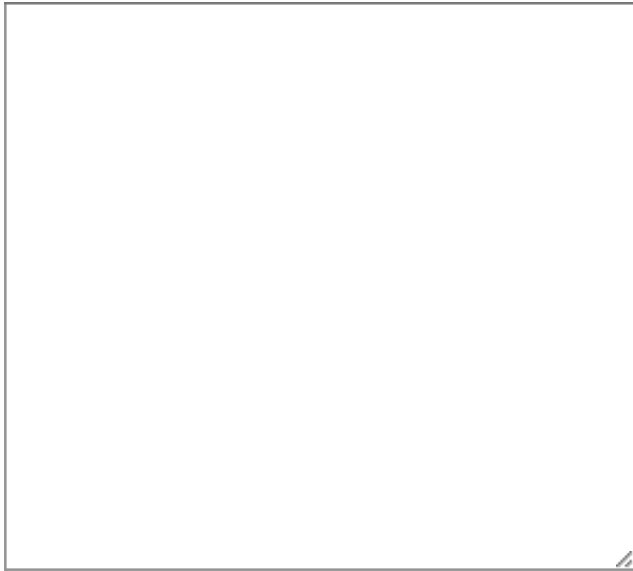
slevenberg: would love to have copies of your 6 page privacy statement and your form letter as described above. Sounds like a good approach!

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Family Medicine

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