

HealthPro Management Associates, Inc

HIPAA Training

As a healthcare provider, you are responsible for becoming familiar with HIPAA policies and procedures. HealthPro will give you an overview of HIPAA but you will need to familiarize yourself with specific privacy policies and procedures at each facility where you are working. Please read the following information, sign the form at the bottom of page 3 and return to HealthPro.

What is HIPAA? HIPAA stands for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. It is the first ever-federal privacy standards to protect patient's medical records and other health information. It took effect on April 14, 2003 although the law was passed in 1996. The privacy regulations ensure a level of privacy protections for patients by limiting the ways that health plans, pharmacies, hospitals and other covered entities can use patients' personal medical information. The regulations protect medical records and other individually identifiable health information, whether it is on paper, in computers or communicated orally. Patient information is to be used only for purposes of treatment, payment and healthcare operations. Use of patient information must be limited to the minimum amount necessary to perform your job.

What is Protected Health Information (PHI)? PHI is information, whether in electronic, oral or paper format, that identifies an individual's physical or mental health condition, the health care the individual has received or payments for such care. It includes name, address, social security number, zip code, age, illnesses, treatments, medications, caregiver's notes, payment for services and any other personal information. HIPAA requires that covered entities have written privacy procedures including a description of staff that has access to protected information, how it will be used and when it may be disclosed. Covered entities generally must take steps to ensure that any business associates who have access to protected information agree to the same limitations on use and disclosure of that information.

Who is entitled to use PHI? Patients generally should be able to see and obtain copies of their medical records and request corrections. There may be a charge. Those individuals who have a legitimate business need to the information may access it. There are limits on how health plans and providers may use PHI. It does not restrict the ability of doctors, nurses and other health care providers from sharing information needed to treat their patients. In other situations, though, PHI generally may not be used for purposes not related to health care and covered entities may use or share only the minimum amount of PHI needed for a particular purpose. Patients would have to sign a release before a covered entity could release the medical information to an outside business.

When can PHI be reported? Under certain limited circumstances, such as reporting of communicable disease to public health agencies, disclosure of patient information may be made outside of the healthcare setting and for reasons other than risk management purposes. These circumstances will generally be limited to reporting suspected child abuse or domestic violence. HIPAA also permits disclosure of PHI when requested by law enforcement under specific circumstances such as a court order or subpoena.

Are there penalties for noncompliance? This is a federal law. Penalties can include a fine of not more than \$50,000, imprisoned not more than 1 year or both. These penalties increase if offenses are committed under false pretenses.

Common sense ideas for protecting PHI:

- Never remove patient records from the practice or facility where you are working.
- Never disclose or discuss patient information for any purpose other than treatment. You can report cases of malpractice or other clinical incidents to us.
- Use common sense and caution in the workplace; do not leave patient records in public view, do not dispose of patient records or test results in public trash receptacles, do not discuss patient's care in public places.
- Do not send patient information via e-mail unless it is encrypted.
- When faxing documents containing PHI, include privacy disclaimer on cover sheet, do not leave confidential documents unattended at a fax machine or copier.
- Password protect all electronic documents containing PHI.
- If you see or hear information that is considered protected and you should not have access to it, keep it to yourself.

As representatives of HealthPro, you are responsible for understanding the basic information. Each facility may have a privacy officer and written privacy policies and procedures that you are responsible for following. In your role as a health care provider you are required to adhere to the strictest rules governing confidentiality as outlined by HIPAA.

I have received and read HealthPro's HIPAA training pamphlet. I understand I am responsible for becoming familiar with policies and procedures applicable to my position regarding HIPAA.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____