

HIPAA Privacy Understanding the Patients Rights

Under HIPAA Privacy the patients are entitled to their healthcare information which should lead to an increased awareness of the confidentiality of their protected health information (PHI). These rights include:

- The right to access or copy any of their healthcare information. Providers may choose to charge for making and sending copies of information, in accordance with state laws.
- The right to inspect or change any of their healthcare information.
- The right to an accounting of any disclosures of the protected health information (PHI) and to whom. It is recommended that the provider record in the patient chart any time the protected health information is given out and to whom it was given, in the event of a request to disclose that information.
- The right to request restrictions on who receives the protected health information (PHI).
- The right to complain to the practice or the Secretary of Health and Human Services about possible violations of the HIPAA Privacy Rule. The complaint must be filed within 180 days of the occurrence.
- The patient has the right to choose a different means of receiving and a location in which to receive protected health information (PHI) by the healthcare provider.
- Patients also have the right to revoke their consent or authorization that they had previously signed.
- Patients have the right to require that their consent be obtained prior to using their protected health information (PHI) for most marketing purposes. If the marketing is done face-to-face with the patient or is a promotional gift, free items imprinted with the dentist's name e.g., toothbrush, floss, calendars, etc., can be done without a patient Authorization Form. The following are not considered to be marketing, therefore do not require a patient consent:
 - Communications about the treatment of the patient.
 - Discussions used for case management or care of the patient.
 - Directing or recommending alternative treatment, healthcare providers, etc. to the patient.