

Tips to Help Protect Patient Privacy

Once you login to One Chart, you are in the electronic medical record – *do not access anything without a work-related reason*. Everything you will see in One Chart is related to patients and/or patient care (referred to as protected health information, or PHI), including without limitation:

- The list you see when you search using Patient Lookup
- The information you see when you click on a patient name on a list/census
- Demographics, such as each patient’s name, address, telephone number, etc

All activity in One Chart is capable of being tracked, and the Privacy Office performs random audits of this activity to confirm no improper access of PHI is occurring.

It is a violation of our policy* for any employee to access or disclose PHI without a current work-related reason – regardless of:

- **Permission** – “My friend called. He knows I work at the hospital, and asked me to look up his record to get some information for him.” - *Your friend needs to submit an [authorization](#) to the HIM department to get this information*
- **Intent** – “But he’s my friend, and he asked me to look at it and help him understand it!” – *If it isn’t for a work-related reason, it isn’t appropriate for you to directly access a medical record. Your friend or his/her family may share information with you if they wish to do so. They may ask your provider to share information with you. They may request and share their medical record, and may give you proxy access to their portal*
- **Publicity** – “But it’s all over the news and everyone already knows about it!” – *The law that prescribes obligations for protecting PHI (HIPAA) applies to us as a health care provider – it does not apply to news media or law enforcement, etc*
- **Disclosure/Re-disclosure** - “But I only looked at the notes, I never told anyone except for co-workers – nobody outside of here!” – *“Just” looking is a violation of our policy* since the access is not for a work-related reason*

REMEMBER: While HIPAA permits the use of PHI for **formal, internal** education - that does **NOT** include informal accessing or sharing of patient information for your own curiosity.

- An example of **formal** training would be a faculty provider with expertise in the area of infectious diseases holding a training session, which includes reviewing unusual laboratory results.
- An example of inappropriate disclosure would include when a member of the workforce sees an interesting condition while looking at a record and then asks his or her co-workers to come look at it (i.e., this disclosure is not for training purposes, but rather for gossiping purposes)

Anyone with questions about our privacy policies or requests for additional privacy training can contact **Debra Bishop**, privacy officer, at 402.559.5136, debrbishop@nebraskamed.com.

* Privacy, Confidentiality & Security of Patient and Proprietary Information policy