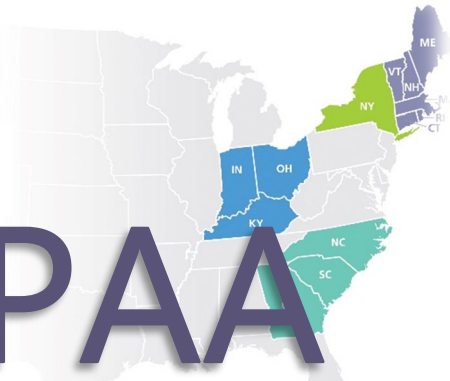


Help With

HIPAA



HIPAA or the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act was passed by Congress in 1996. It requires the protection and confidential handling of protected health information



All dialysis patients have rights and responsibilities, which are reviewed with them upon initiation of treatment. One of the rights listed, and extensively reviewed, are patient's privacy rights or HIPAA.

Why is it important to allow posting of some patient information?

Patient involvement is strongly encouraged to meet quality improvement goals set by CMS. One of the best ways to engage patients is to share information about patient progress in the facility.

How can a facility prevent HIPAA violations when posting information?

Protecting patients against any HIPAA violations is of utmost importance. In order to ensure patients are protected, many facilities have initiated a consent process which allows information sharing with permission from patients.

What can a facility do to make sure HIPAA requirements are being met?

- Create an admission process to obtain written consent from patients to share their information and images, and provide details on the type of updates the facility likes to post
- Annually review forms on every patient to ensure consent is current, and have patients review and resign any necessary paperwork
- Keep lists of patients who have not signed consent for information sharing, up-to-date and easily available to all staff, so they can check before posting any patient updates



Examples of activities where patients may have personal information disclosed about them:

Activity	Facility Concern	How to Ensure HIPAA Compliance
Sharing a patient's transplant status with other patients using the "Newly Transplanted, Let's Celebrate" poster	Poster includes patient photo; patient will not want their transplant status disclosed; poster is displayed in public area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Before or following the transplant, ask the patient for verbal permission to display the poster and/or tell other patients about their status ✓ Allow the patient to set boundaries on how much information they would like disclosed. Do <u>not</u> display poster if the patient declines.
Inviting patients to the facility's monthly Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement (QAPI) meetings	Facilities are concerned about patients hearing staff discuss treatment and clinical information about other patients in the facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ When inviting patients to participate in QAPI, designate a portion of the meeting (either beginning or end) to have them speak about patient activities, concerns, and/or ideas ✓ Avoid talking about other patient-specific information during this time



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