

HIPAA Privacy Regulations: Sample Newsletter Article

**** (Please tailor as appropriate for your organization.)*

Patient privacy has always been a top priority at X hospital. All hospital staff - from our physicians to our payroll specialists - are dedicated to protecting our patients' privacy. The new HIPAA privacy regulations provide hospitals and patients with an additional means to help guarantee that patient privacy is a top priority for all providers – hospitals, physicians and pharmacies – throughout the United States.

X Hospital is busily preparing for April 14 2003, the deadline for when all of America's hospitals must comply with the new regulations. In addition to these federal regulations, many states and hospitals already have privacy regulations and policies in place.

The new rules are beneficial for patients because they strengthen and set national standards for the privacy of our medical information. They guarantee strong privacy rights to patients and families in a way that puts common sense ahead of bureaucracy. The rules give patients more control over who can see their private medical information.

As an organization dedicated to safeguarding patients' medical records, hospitals want patients to fully understand their medical privacy rights and know how their medical information is used. However, our job #1 is to care for our patients – nothing should interfere with that. The final HIPAA privacy rule finds the right balance. It protects patient information but allows all essential activities to go on, which benefits all of us.

Make no mistake; the new rules have required sweeping operational changes. They touch every department, employee and contractor of this hospital. But, they are the right thing to do, and X hospital is committed to making them work for patients and their families and our staff.