

Health insurance portability and accountability act's ethics

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HIPAA Ethics

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is a major health policy currently followed in health care centers, in United States. The health policy is responsible for health insurance of workers and citizens. The Act became a policy in August 21, 1996 after President Clinton signed it to be a law where it became documented in Public Law 104-191. The policy safeguards and protects the health information of patients from unauthorized person without legal permission from the patient. The purpose for the formation of the Act was to increase health care system's effectiveness and efficiency. It also recommends that a standard electronic device should be used to store all medical information of a person. The deadline for embracing the act was September 23, 2013. The health policy incorporates some ethical issues. These ethical issues include respect of the patient's health information, confidentiality and honesty.

HIPAA law has bought has established responsibilities for health care institutions. The HIPAA law has enhanced confidentiality of the patients' medical information. Confidentiality is the state of having something in a strict privacy or secrecy way. This helps to protect the patient rights since only the required medical personnel's can access the information. This is a component of providing quality medical health care. In a recent case, a patient suffering from paranoid schizophrenia got admitted in a mental hospital. The nurses at the hospital wanted to disclose the health information to the family. However, the patients' physician refused since the patient had not allowed them to do so. The patients' health rapidly improved, and within a week, he was ready for discharge.

The patients' health condition requires maximum respect. Respect is the condition of esteem. In case of ongoing treatment, obtaining payments and for healthcare operations one can share protected health information. Except for insurance reasons in order to receive payments written authorization should be presented any time one requires medical records. Under this condition HIPAA only allows access of minimum necessary information to perform job duties. This enhances respect for patients' health information. In another case, a staff member in a medical practice disclosed HIV status of the patient. This happened mistakenly after the doctor's office faxed medical records to the patients' place of employment rather the new healthcare provider. He thereby disclosed PHI to several other individuals. The employee responsible received given a written disciplinary warning.

Honesty with patients' records is mandatory. The employees in the medical practice cannot temper with the patients' medical information. According to HIPAA it is inappropriate to sell patients medical records. The law also states that it is inappropriate to market the patients' information to a drug company. It is also wrong to access fellow colleagues' medical information without written authorization. The employee should also be honest and not tamper with patients medical records. A private practice physician who was a principal investigator in a clinical study disclosed patients' diagnostic codes to a contract research organization. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) did not approve the document. This made the private medical practice review its policies and educate its workers on the new medical procedures.

Although HIPAA safeguards and protects the health information of a person, it is harmful in some ways. First, it restricts family members from acquiring

information on health status of the patient. This may hinder them from taking appropriate actions such as taking the patient to a highly developed health center for proper treatment. The policy also denies beneficiaries rights of accessing the patients' health information. Therefore, beneficiaries become uncertain of their fate when the provider is sick.

In conclusion, the health Act is appropriate for safeguarding health status of the patient. It is also important in health insurance of a person. However, the policy should allow the family members and close relatives to access the health status of the patient. This will ensure that close relatives and family members are aware patient's health information and status.

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