

Feb. 28, 2020: Advocacy spotlight on New resource will help physicians integrate record sharing into daily operations

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Best practices for efficiently providing patients with electronic access to medical records are combined into an authoritative resource – the new *Patient Records Electronic Access Playbook*.

The AMA has created a new online resource to direct physician practices through the legal complexities and operational challenges of providing patients with access to their digital health information. The *Patient Records Electronic Access Playbook* makes it easy and efficient for medical practices to integrate record-sharing fulfillment with day-to-day operations.

The four-part playbook compiles an extensive catalogue of educational information and reference resources with practical tips, case scenarios and best practices for protecting patient privacy while empowering patients and their caregivers with convenient electronic access to their complete medical record.

"As technology plays an increasingly important role in collecting and exchanging health data, the AMA believes that providing patients with improved information access and better information privacy are not mutually exclusive goals," said AMA Board Chair Jesse M. Ehrenfeld, MD, MPH. "Patients deserve both, and the new playbook is an important example of the AMA's commitment to ensuring patients can easily access their personal health information that has been entrusted to physicians."

Patients have the right to access their medical information. The AMA playbook dispels the myths and misconceptions from an array of complex federal and state laws. Navigating this puzzle of legal requirements has been a source of significant confusion among patients, third parties and especially medical practices focused first and foremost on delivering patient care. Access also improves the overall efficiency of the medical care team. The playbook offers authoritative information to help medical practices better understand the pertinent laws and how they govern key topics for patient record sharing. These topics include:

- Amounts and types of information
- Forms and formats for sharing records

- | Patient requests and involvement of third parties
- | Timing for record request fulfillment
- | Denial of record request access
- | Permissible charges
- | Confidentiality of substance use disorder records

To help medical practices integrate legal compliance with patient care operations, the playbook offers a set of steps to make the fulfillment of patient record requests clearer and more efficient. The steps are designed to help medical practices understand the capabilities of their electronic health record (EHR) systems and promote greater use of EHRs among patients.

The *Patient Records Electronic Access Playbook* adds to a growing list of AMA resources designed to help physicians navigate and succeed in a continually evolving health care environment. In 2018, the AMA launched its first playbook offering guidance to medical practices on the most efficient path for applying and adopting digital health solutions.

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