HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT PROTECTING ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS?

An electronic health record (EHR) is more than a digital version of a patient's paper chart.

EHRs are real-time, patient-centered records that make information available instantly and securely to authorized users. Most EHRs and related equipment have security features built in or provided as part of a service, but they are not always configured or enabled properly. **As the guardian of ePHI, it is up to you — along with your designated staff members — to learn about these basic features and ensure they are functioning and are updated when necessary.** Healthcare organizations need to make protecting their EHRs from cyber threats a top priority in order to keep their patients safe and secure.

SOURCE: https://www.healthit.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/privacy/privacy-and-security-guide-chapter-4.pdf

EHRs CAN:

- Contain a patient's medical history, diagnoses, medications, treatment plans, immunization dates, allergies, radiology images, and laboratory and test results
- Allow access to evidence-based tools that providers can use to make decisions about a patient's care
- Automate and streamline provider workflow

SOURCE: https://www.healthit.gov/topic/health-it-basics/benefits-ehrs

BY THE NUMBERS

94% of providers report that their EHR makes records **readily available at point of care.**

92% of patients surveyed were **happy their doctor used e-prescribing.**

88% report that their EHR produces **clinical benefits for the practice.**

75% of providers report that their EHR allows them to **deliver better patient care.**

SOURCE: https://www.healthit.gov/topic/health-it-and-health-information-exchange-basics/improved-diagnostics-patient-outcomes

EHRs have been proven to be useful for providers and patients alike, but what does that mean for ePHI cybersecurity protection? Increasing use of EHRs increases cyber risks to your patients. In the next section, you will find resources to help you better protect your patients from these risks.

LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION?

Check out the below resources from across HHS!

HHS 405(d) — Aligning Health Care Industry Security Approaches

405(d) aims to enhance cybersecurity and align industry/sector approaches by developing best practices and mitigation strategies to attack the most common cyber threats facing the healthcare sector. The HICP Publication includes mitigation strategies that can protect against threats to EHRs. The 405(d) initiative develops a variety of resources that can help HPH organizations mitigate cyber-risks.

RESOURCES

HICP Main Document
HICP Technical Volume 1
HICP Technical Volume 2

HHS — Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

The CMS pledges to put patients first in all its programs - Medicaid, Medicare, and the Health Insurance Exchanges. They provide meaningful information about quality and costs to be active health care consumers and include supporting innovative approaches to improving quality, accessibility, and affordability, while finding the best ways to use innovative technology to support patient-centered care.

RESOURCES

CMS Home Page
Certified EHR Technology
2020 Promoting Interoperability Programs: 2015 Edition Certified Electronic Health Record Technology

HHS — Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC)

The ONC is at the forefront of the administration's IT efforts and is a resource to the entire health system to support the adoption of health information technology and the promotion of nationwide, standards-based health information exchange to improve health care. The ONC website features many articles specific to the benefits and impacts of EHRs. Additionally, the Health IT Playbook can assist you with selecting, adopting, and optimizing workflow with an EHR.

RESOURCES

About ONC
Guide to Privacy and Security of Electronic Health Information, Chapter 4
Benefits of EHRs
Health IT Playbook – Electronic Health Records, Section 1
Regional Extension Centers

HHS — Office for Civil Rights (OCR)

The OCR guide for small health care practices is intended to assist these practices in reassessing their existing health information security policies as they consider adopting and implementing emerging health information technology capabilities such as EHRs and electronic health information exchange.

RESOURCES

OCR Home Page
Privacy, Security, and Electronic Health Records
Reassessing Your Security Practices in a Health IT Environment—A Guide for Small Healthcare Practices

HHS 405(d)
Aligning Health Care Industry Security Approaches

To learn more about how you can protect your patients from cyber threats check out the Health Industry Cybersecurity Practices: Managing Threats and Protecting Patients publication. Check out the available resources 405(d) has to offer by visiting our social media pages: @ask405d on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram and LinkedIn!