



The EHR: Benefits for Privacy and Security

How the EHR Protects
Health Information



National Initiative

“By computerizing health records, we can avoid dangerous medical mistakes, reduce costs and improve care.”

George W. Bush, State of the Union Address

January 20, 2004



What Else Can the EHR Offer?

Computerizing health records will also enhance the privacy and security of protected health information (PHI).



How Can the EHR Enhance Privacy and Security?

It can:

- Control Physical and System Access
- Monitor Workstation Use and Security
- Audit access and need-to-know
- Enhance Device and Media Controls
- Employ Transmission Security

Administrative Controls



- Policies and procedures
- Employee training
 - Privacy training
 - Security training
- Background checks

Managing Physical Access



- Systems are physically inaccessible to unauthorized users
- A Security Plan addresses safeguards against tampering and theft
- Contingencies in place to recover or restore lost data in case of a disaster or emergency

Managing Technical/System Access



- Identification and authentication
- Access control lists
- Automatic log-off

Workstation Use and Security

- Some job functions might only be available at certain workstations
 - Volunteer might see only census information
 - Some printing functions available only in certain areas or workstations
- Physical attributes of workstation
 - Privacy filters
 - Screen unable to be viewed by casual observer

Monitoring and Audit Controls

- Intrusion detection
- Audit users for authorized use of PHI
- Apply sanctions for failure to comply with policies and procedures



Device and Media Controls

- Must address disposal of information and hardware
- If hardware is reused, information must be removed
- Hardware must be tracked as it is reused
- Data must be backed up for retrieval prior to hardware being moved

Transmission Security

Encryption



The transformation of plain text into an unreadable cipher text

Conclusion

The EHR will soon be reality...

- We will have better privacy and security protections.
- Our information will be available when we need it.

Your HIM Professionals Are a Valuable Resource!



Working together we can realize all the benefits of EHR!

