

April '03

HIPAA—Health Insurance Portability and Accountability

Now that security policy is driven by HIPAA, it is important to know the role HDSI takes as health care providers gear up for compliance.

Business Associate Contracts

As a business associate to our customers, HDSI has been requested on a few occasions to sign contracts regarding permitted uses and disclosures of information that we have access to. These contracts, required by HIPAA, illustrate how HDSI is to use appropriate safeguards and report non-permitted uses/disclosures. As a courtesy, HDSI has sent Business Associate Contracts to all of our customers. If you have not received yours, please contact HDSI.

HDSI Safeguards

Health Data Systems has strict policy and procedures pertaining to the data we handle on a daily basis. Even though HIPAA relates strictly to patient data, HDSI handles ALL data (patient, employee, financial) with the strictest of confidence. Besides the standards maintained with live data, backups, encryption, etc. the same principals are used with old data, such as destroying old data upon customer requests and shredding material on-site.

Accounting...The Administrative Requirements

As designated by HIPAA, "A covered entity must have in place appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to protect the privacy of protected health information." Health Data Systems has always had several layers of security integrated into our software. The login process has been designed to insure that ONLY those who know all the login components (login, home number, home password, User ID) can login. Again, it's imperative that the USER ID be known only to the individual it is assigned. For other accounting options, refer to the February '03 *Interests* for details on HDSI's Job Accounting System. This application will provide detailed records of users entering, using, and leaving your applications.

"A covered entity must have in place appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to protect the privacy of protected health information."

What's Next?

Health Data Systems will incorporate HIPAA compliant formats on all files transmitted to Medicare intermediaries. We are already in the testing process with several intermediaries and new programs will be in place well before the October 16th compliance date. If you have any questions on how HIPAA effects HDSI please contact us today, at (847)398-0000, and see what benefits can be found today by taking advantage of tomorrow's technology.