



Health Sciences Center

School of Public Health

Louisiana Tumor Registry

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April 14, 2003

Dear Health Care Provider:

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) became law April 14, 2001, and will go into effect April 14, 2003. Numerous questions regarding the impact of this law on cancer reporting have arisen, and a question-and-answer summary of these concerns is attached.

HIPAA regulations affect current state cancer-reporting procedures only minimally. In sum:

HIPAA allows for the reporting of identifiable cancer data to public health authorities. Because the Louisiana Tumor Registry is required to perform cancer surveillance by state law (R.S. 40:1299.80 et seq.), it qualifies as a public health authority. Consequently, your facility may continue to report incidence, treatment, and follow-up data to the LTR in compliance with state law. HIPAA does not require written informed consent from patients whose disease or injury is reported to public health authorities, but facilities must document that reporting has occurred.

HIPAA also permits health care providers to exchange information about a patient if both have a medical relationship with the patient. Again, the reporting must be documented.

If you have questions about HIPAA and cancer registration, please call me at 504/568-5795.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Patricia A. Andrews'.

Patricia A. Andrews, MPH
Instructor and Registry Liaison