

# HIPAA HIGHLIGHTS

*December 2022*

## ***Verifying You Have the Correct Patient***



Paper document errors **are the most frequent HIPAA breaches of PHI at URMCA and Affiliates**, and they highlight the enormous responsibility of handling patient information. Examples include AVSs, lab results, lab requisitions, medications, itemized bills, a statement of payment, referrals, appointments and other letters. When misplaced or given out to the wrong patient, commonly used documents can have serious implications for the patient and our organization. Follow a standard process when managing these documents.

The **Paper Document Handoff Standard** outlines steps for in-person handoffs of paper documents that if followed, greatly reduce the chance of giving PHI to the wrong patient. Some steps are adaptable to mailed documents as well.

These steps include:

- Always greet the patient upon entry & exit and obtain two patient identifiers, usually Name and Date of Birth.
- Ask patients with MyChart that do not require post procedure instructions if they would like to receive their AVS via their MyChart. If they agree, **you do not need to print** the AVS. If the patient does not have MyChart, let them know instructions for setting it up is on the last page of their AVS.
- Do not hand-off separate documents to the patient. Wait until all of the documents they require have been printed.
  - Do not staple or clip the documents together;
  - Do not place them underneath an object or other non-PHI documents.
- Always review each printed page for the two patient identifiers:
  - Highlight the identifiers if this is part of your department process.
- Always make eye contact with the patient during the handoff process. Involve the patient in the process. Ask them to review each page for accuracy of their demographics. If an error has been made, this is the time to correct it, not after the patient has left the area!
- Ask the patient if they have any questions. If you cannot answer a specific question, reach out to the technician or nurse who serviced the patient.

For additional information on any HIPAA-related topics, please refer to the URMCA intranet site at

**<https://sites.mc.rochester.edu/departments/hipaa/>**