

# 5 Ways To Protect Your Patients' Rights

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April 11-17 is Health Information Privacy and Security Week, during which healthcare providers recognize the necessity behind health information in the delivery of care - and the critical need to keep that information safe and secure.

Health information management (HIM) and technology professionals work diligently to ensure valuable information is only available to those who need it and no one else and this week is set aside to honor that commitment. As a professional in your field, it is crucial to help prevent lawsuits to have a process that your staff follows for keeping your clients information safe. Simple steps such as adding extra security to your computer programs and allowing only those who need access to client files the access.

## **5 Ways To Protect Your Patients' Rights**

1. Never discuss the patient's case with anyone without the patient's permission (including family and friends during off-duty hours)
2. Never leave hard copies of forms or records where unauthorized persons may access them
3. Only use secure routes to send patient information (for example, official mail) and always mark this information confidential
4. When using an interpreter, ensure that the interpreter understands the importance of patient confidentiality and signs an agreement with you to keep your patient's records confidential.
5. Keep records that contain patient names and other identifying information in closed, locked files

All healthcare providers should obtain professional liability insurance should a slip up occur in protecting patients' privacy. The importance of what they provide is undeniable as they diligently treat people to the best of their ability.