

Confidentiality and Authorization Forms

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... The general rule is that therapists and counselors do not release patient information unless required or permitted by law to do so or unless specifically authorized by the patient in writing and signed by the patient. Oral authorizations are usually not valid. Some states specifically delineate the content of such forms. Does your state specify required contents for health practitioners? HIPAA regulations, for those who are "covered providers," specify the core elements and the required statements that must be contained in an authorization form. One of the items that should be included but is not mentioned in the regulation is a statement advising the person signing the authorization of the right to receive a copy of the authorization. See <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa> for more information on HIPAA.