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Better Health Care for all Floridians

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Florida Medicaid Health Information Network, powered by Availity



FAQs on Privacy and Security

What is the Florida Medicaid Health Information Network?

The Florida Medicaid Health Information Network (Medicaid HIN) is an electronic multi-payer health information portal for Medicaid treating providers resulting from a partnership between the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (Agency) and Availity, LLC. The Medicaid HIN gives providers a comprehensive view of patients' claims-based medical history, retroactive 18 months, which includes both available commercial and Medicaid payer data sources. This service is offered free to Medicaid treating providers.

In addition, providers are able to view eligibility and benefits, make claims submissions, and perform e-prescribing with a prescription history look-up. In 2010, there will be a single sign-on for e-prescribing, as well as a clinical decision support tool.

The real-time, payer-based health records are obtained from Medicaid claims information. This includes patient health information such as the following:

- Office visits and hospitalizations
- Diagnoses and associated procedures
- Prescription history
- Lab event history
- Radiology event history
- Immunization history

How can Medicaid treating providers view claims history on the Medicaid HIN?

Each provider, once they or their organization are enrolled with Availity, receives an assigned User ID to be used in requesting patient information. To view a patient's health information, the provider is required to confirm that he or she has permission or that the patient is unable to consent in a medical emergency. If the patient has not already done so, he or she will need to fill out a form giving the provider full disclosure permission to view health information.



Who else can view patient health information?

Access is currently reserved only for treating providers who are registered with Availity. Employees of treating providers can view health information as necessary to perform their duties, and as they are authorized by the provider.

Why do patients have to sign a permission form for doctors to access the Medicaid HIN?

There are some laws that require special permissions for the disclosure of certain conditions, such as HIV/AIDS, mental health, STDs, alcohol abuse, and substance abuse. These requirements must be met for every patient.

Using the permission form, a patient is able to give permission to each of their providers or just a few. They can change their consent for access at any time. Also, the patient can give permission on behalf of a family member for whom they have legal responsibility.

What if a patient does not wish to give permission for full disclosure?

If a patient decides not to give permission, then the provider cannot view the information contained in the Medicaid HIN unless it is a medical emergency.

The choice to give permission does not affect the ability to receive medical care or health insurance coverage, and cannot be used as a basis for denial of health services. Refusing to sign the full disclosure form does not stop the release of health information that is otherwise permitted by law without specific authorization or permission.

Is the health information on the Medicaid HIN private and secure?

The Medicaid HIN provides a view of health information, one patient at a time, which is housed in a secure, encrypted database at the Agency.

What other protections are there?

An additional security feature is the audit report. The audit report creates a record of everyone who looks at this health information. The audit report will show the patient, date, time, and name of the provider accessing the health information. The audit report also shows whether the record was viewed with patient consent or in an emergency.

In addition, there are laws and regulations that require the privacy and security of health information. These laws and regulations come from the Federal government and the State government. You can find more information about these laws at: www.FHIN.net/PSresourceCtr/Crosswalktool.shtml.

What happens if a computer hacker breaks into the Medicaid HIN computers and steals health information?

This is very unlikely because the Medicaid HIN stores health information in a secure, protected database. If an unauthorized person were to break into this database through its computer firewall and security controls, the automated auditing feature would track the hacker's activity and would create an audit trail to help law enforcement track down the hacker. While this is unlikely, in the event of a breach of security, the Agency will inform patients if their records were involved.

What should be done in the event of a violation of State or Federal law as it relates to personal health information?

A complaint can be filed with the Federal Office of Civil Rights. To file a complaint, or for more information, please visit: www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/complaints/index.html.