

PROTECTING PATIENT PRIVACY

Guidelines for Verbal Communication of Patient Information

Follow the guidelines below when making telephone calls, leaving voicemails, or having discussions involving patient information.

Telephone calls and voicemails

- Be aware of your voice level when discussing patient information on the phone – can others hear you who don't have a need to know?
- Limit the information you leave on patients' voicemail – only leave your name and call-back number unless the patient has asked for a detailed message.
- When a patient calls – know who you are talking to. If the patient is not known to you, ask the caller for at least two identifiers in addition to their name (e.g. DOB, last 4 of their SSN) and compare to the same information noted in the patient record.

In-person Conversations

- Be aware of your voice level – if possible, find a private place to talk.
- If you are in or near a public area or other place where you can be overheard, speak quietly and avoid using patient names or other information that could be used to identify a specific patient.
- Unless you are speaking with the patient or another provider for treatment purposes, limit the amount of patient information to the minimum necessary.

Relevant Policies

- [2003-25: Uses and Disclosures of PHI Involving Family, Friends, and Others](#)
- [2003-20 Verification of Individuals Requesting Protected Health Information](#)
- [2003-21 Minimum Necessary Protected Health Information](#)

Questions or Concerns

If you have questions, need guidance or have a privacy concern, please **contact us** at:

privacyoffice@uchc.edu

or

860.679.7226