



HIPAA Enforcement and the Pandemic

The View from OCR Industry Experts

November 18, 2020



Legal Disclaimer

Although the information provided by Clearwater Compliance may be helpful in informing customers and others who have an interest in data privacy and security issues, it does not constitute legal advice. This information may be based in part on current federal law and is subject to change based on changes in federal law or subsequent interpretative guidance. Where this information is based on federal law, it must be modified to reflect state law where that state law is more stringent than the federal law or other state law exceptions apply. This information is intended to be a general information resource and should not be relied upon as a substitute for competent legal advice specific to your circumstances. YOU SHOULD EVALUATE ALL INFORMATION, OPINIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS PROVIDED BY CLEARWATER IN CONSULTATION WITH YOUR LEGAL OR OTHER ADVISOR, AS APPROPRIATE.

Copyright Notice

All materials contained within this document are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published, or broadcast without the prior, express written permission of Clearwater Compliance LLC. You may not alter or remove any copyright or other notice from copies of this content.

*The existence of a link or organizational reference in any of the following materials should not be assumed as an endorsement by Clearwater Compliance LLC.

Webinar Logistics

1. Slide materials – Link In Chat Box
(Should have also received in reminder email earlier today)
2. All attendees are in “Listen Only Mode”
3. Please ask content related questions in “Q&A”
4. In case of technical issues, use / check “Chat”
5. **Please participate in all polls**
6. Please complete Exit Survey when you leave our session
7. Recorded version, final slides, and Certificate of Attendance will be shared with you within 48 hours



Introduction to Clearwater



Leading provider of cyber risk management and HIPAA compliance software and solutions for healthcare



100% success rate when deliverables submitted to the Office For Civil Rights (OCR)



Founded in Nashville in 2009, colleagues in 20+ states, growing rapidly



Portfolio company of Altaris Capital Partners, a healthcare PE firm with \$4.8B under management



Approximately 400 customers, including 68 IDNs, many with multi-year enterprise programs



Your Presenters:



Jon Moore, *MS, JD, HCISPP*

Chief Risk Officer & SVP, Consulting Services

- 25+ Years Executive Leadership, Technology Consulting and Law
- 14+ Years Data Privacy & Security
- 10+ Years Healthcare
- Former PwC Federal Healthcare Leadership Team
- Former IT Operational Leader PwC Federal Practice
- BA Economics Haverford College, MS E-Commerce Carnegie Mellon University, JD Dickinson Law Penn State University, HCISPP
- Speaker and Published Author on Security, Privacy, IT Strategy and Impact of Emerging Technologies

Your Presenters:



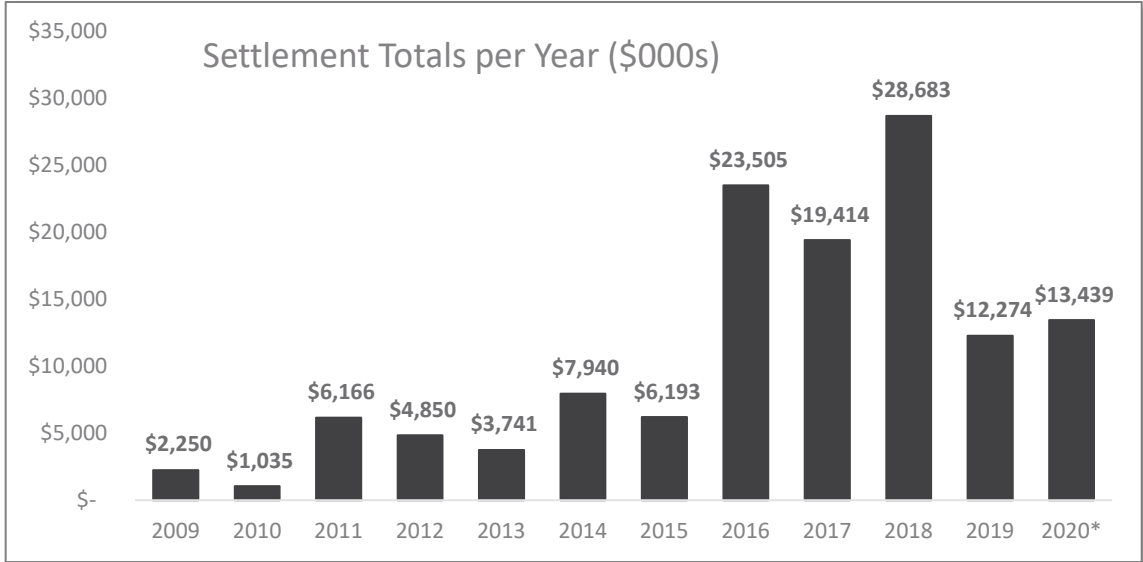
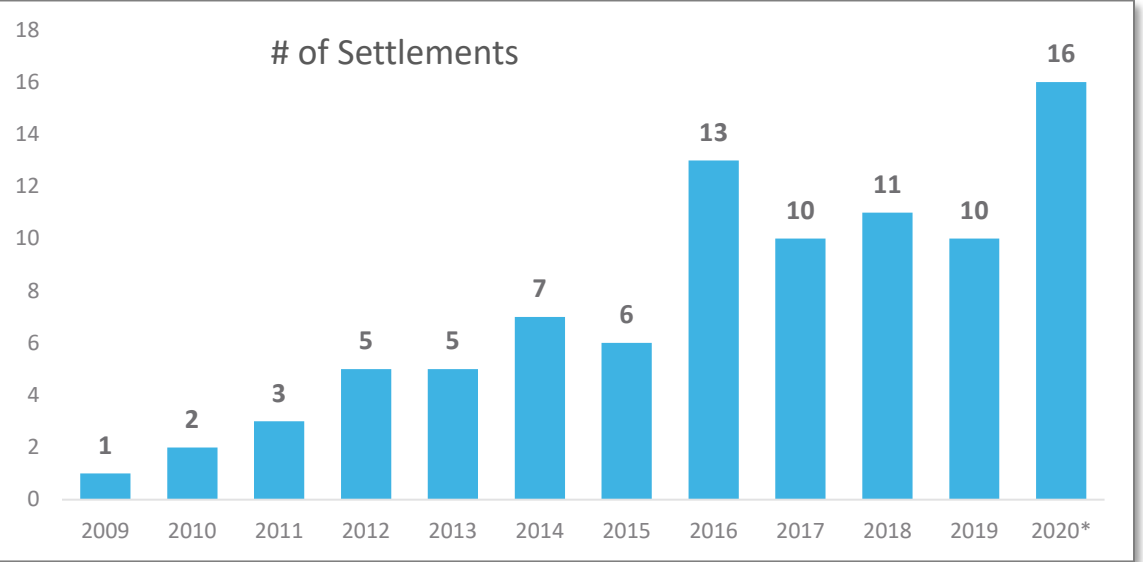
Iliana Peters, JD, LLM, CISSP

Shareholder, Polsinelli PC, Former Acting Deputy Director HHS Office for Civil Rights

- Recognized by the healthcare industry as a preeminent thought leader and speaker on data privacy and security, particularly regarding HIPAA, the HITECH Act, the 21st Century Cures Act, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA), the Privacy Act, and emerging cyber threats to health data
- For over a decade, she both developed health information privacy and security policy, including on emerging technologies and cyber threats, for the Department of Health and Human Services, and enforced HIPAA regulations through spearheading multi-million dollar settlement agreements and civil money penalties pursuant to HIPAA.
- Member: ABA, AHLA, ISC2, Hispanic National Bar Association

Enforcement Actions Hit a New Record Number

At end of July 2020 only three announced settlements for the year. Now we are at 17 a new record.



11 Cases in HIPAA Right of Access Initiative

On November 12th OCR announced settlement of its 11th HIPAA Right of Access Initiative enforcement action. The HIPAA Right of Access Initiative was announced as an enforcement priority in 2019 to support individuals' right to timely access to their health records at a reasonable cost.



WISE PSYCHIATRY

Patricia King MD &
Associates

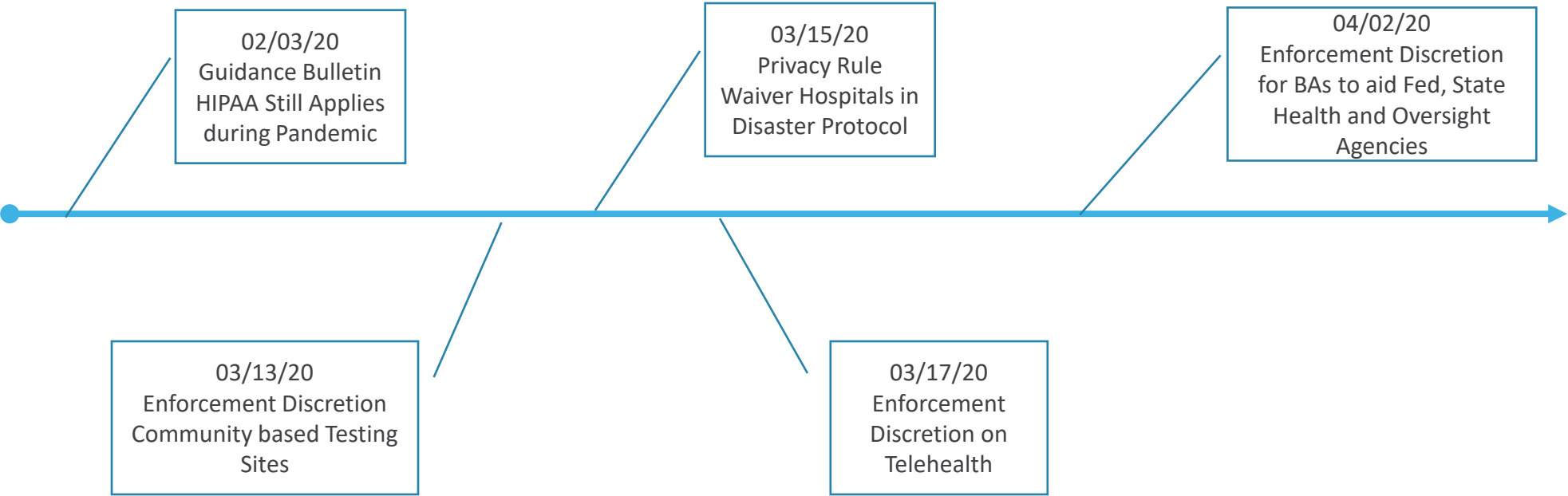


Beth Israel Lahey Health
Dr. Rajendra Bhayani

*These cases only involve 1 patient.

Waivers and Enforcement Discretion

OCR Announcements during COVID Pandemic



Risk Analysis an Ongoing Problem

Asked to characterize the state of HIPAA compliance generally, Severino lamented a laundry list of lapses involving some of the law's most elementary privacy provisions. "For enforcement purposes, there's **still a lot of low-hanging fruit**," the OCR director said. "There are a lot of entities that are **not doing the basic steps** to make sure they have proper, for example, **cybersecurity protections** in place. . . – February 2020

<https://digital.mwe.com/27/7458/landing-pages/hipaa-boss-sees--low-hanging-fruit--ripe-for-enforcement---law360.pdf>

88%

of ePHI-related cases failed
to conduct an OCR-Quality
Risk Analysis

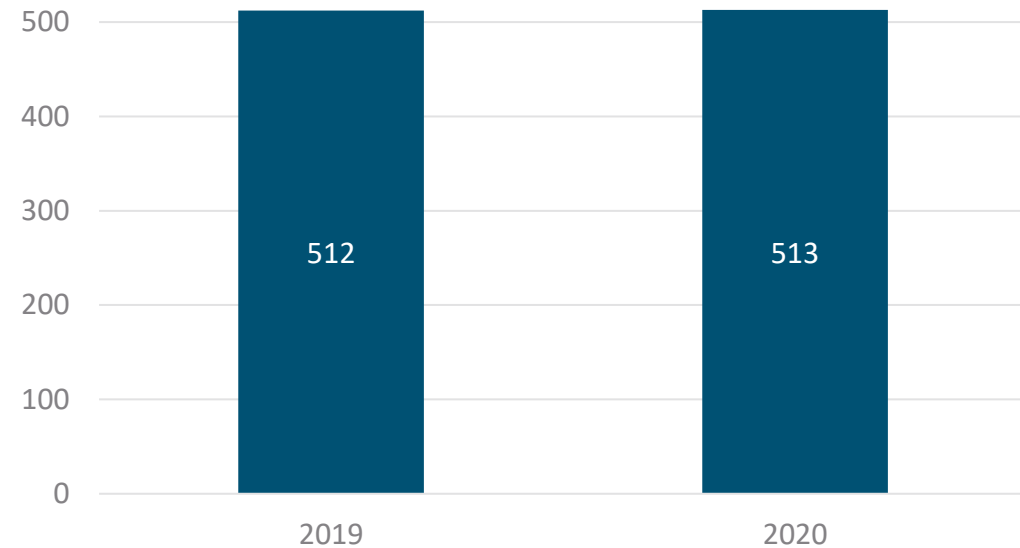
{ Not detailed or comprehensive enough
Not following OCR/NIST guidance
Not enough documentation/evidence }

Increases in Breaches

The number of breaches of 500 records or more reported to OCR has now surpassed last years total with a month and a half to go in the year.

Year over year we are 13.5% ahead of last year.

Total Breaches 2019 v YTD 2020



Risk Assessment Following Ransomware Attack

A breach under the HIPAA Rules is defined as, “...the acquisition, access, use, or disclosure of PHI in a manner not permitted under the [HIPAA Privacy Rule] which compromises the security or privacy of the PHI.” See 45 C.F.R. 164.402

To demonstrate that there is a low probability that the protected health information (PHI) has been compromised because of a breach, a risk assessment considering at least the following four factors (see 45 C.F.R. 164.402(2)) must be conducted:

1. the nature and extent of the PHI involved, including the types of identifiers and the likelihood of re-identification;
2. the unauthorized person who used the PHI or to whom the disclosure was made;
3. whether the PHI was actually acquired or viewed; and
4. the extent to which the risk to the PHI has been mitigated.

FACT SHEET: Ransomware and HIPAA

A recent U.S. Government interagency report indicates that, on average, ransomware attacks since early 2016 (a 300% increase over the 1,000 da reported in 2015).¹ Ransomware exploits human and technical weaknesses in an organization's technical infrastructure in order to deny the organization access to its data by encrypting that data. However, there are measures known to be effective in preventing ransomware and to recover from a ransomware attack. This document covers prevention and recovery from a healthcare sector perspective, including the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) has in assisting HIPAA covered entities and business associates to prevent and recover from ransomware attacks, and how HIPAA processes should be managed in response to a ransomware attack.

1. What is ransomware?

Ransomware is a type of malware (malicious software) distinct from other types of malware. Its characteristic is that it attempts to deny access to a user's data, usually by encrypting it with a key known only to the hacker who deployed the malware, until a ransom is paid. If the ransom is not paid, the ransomware directs the user to pay the ransom to the hacker, usually in cryptocurrency, such as Bitcoin) in order to receive a decryption key. However, some ransomware that also destroys or exfiltrates² data, or ransomware in combination with other malware that does so.

2. Can HIPAA compliance help covered entities and business associates prevent ransomware, including ransomware?

Yes. The HIPAA Security Rule requires implementation of security measures to protect electronic protected health information (ePHI) from unauthorized introduction of malware, including ransomware. Some of these required measures include:

- implementing a security management process, which includes conducting risk assessments to identify threats and vulnerabilities to electronic protected health information (ePHI) and implementing security measures to mitigate or remediate those threats and vulnerabilities;
- implementing procedures to guard against and detect malicious software.

¹ United States Government Interagency Guidance Document, *How to Protect Your Organization from Ransomware*, available at <https://www.justice.gov/criminal-ccips/file/872771/download>.

² Exfiltration is “[t]he unauthorized transfer of information from an information system.” See *Security and Privacy Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations*, NIST SP 800-53, available at <http://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/SpecialPublications/NIST.SP.800-53>.

TLP:WHITE



JOINT CYBERSECURITY ADVISORY

Ransomware Activity Targeting the Healthcare and Public Health Sector

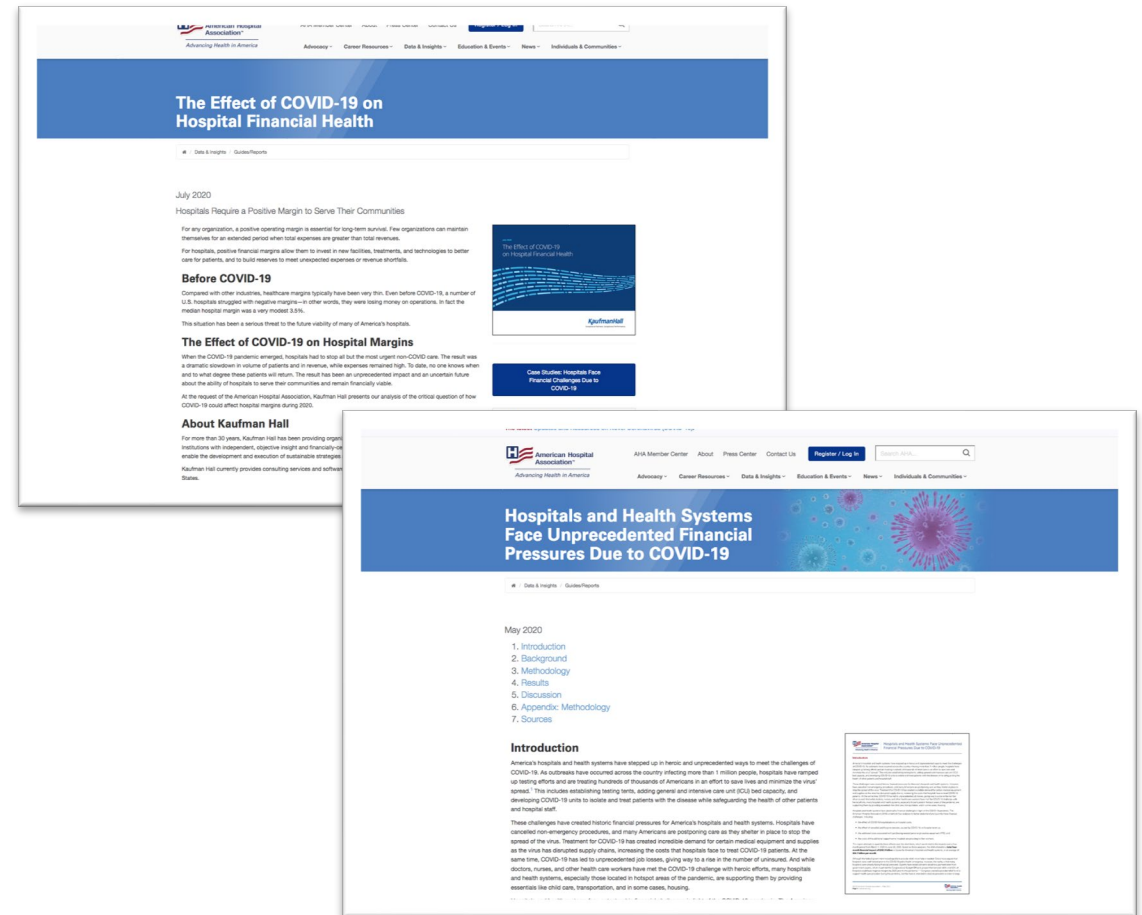
AA20-302A
October 28, 2020



TLP:WHITE

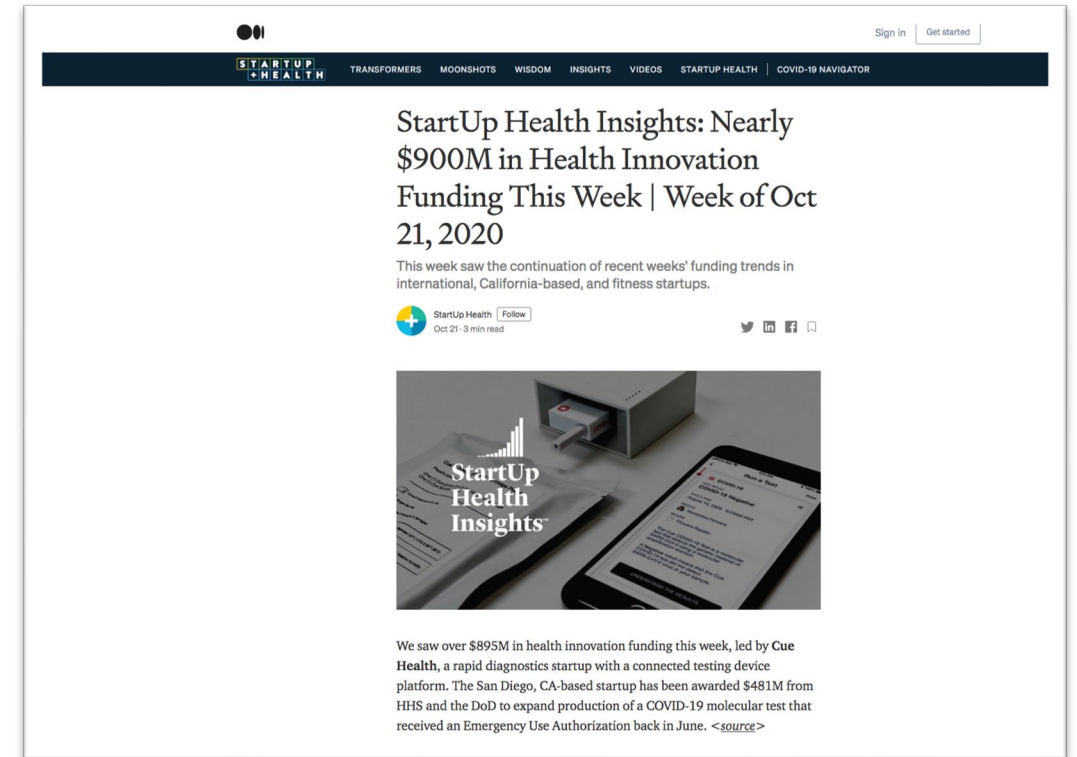
Pandemics Financial Impact and Compliance

The Pandemic and resulting shut down of elective procedures has resulted in many provider organizations experiencing significant financial impact. The AHA estimates a **total four-month financial impact of \$202.6 billion** in losses for America's hospitals and health systems, or an average of **\$50.7 billion per month**.



Exploding Investment in Healthcare IT

Despite, or perhaps because of, the Pandemic there has been increasing investment in healthcare IT. This included almost \$900M during the week of October 21, 2020.



Letters from OCR

If OCR continues its practice of sending a letter to inquiry to every organization reporting a breach of 500 records or more, there will be more organizations receiving letters from OCR than ever before.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Voice - (404) 562-7886, (800) 368-1019
TDD - (404) 562-7884, (800) 537-7897
FAX - (404) 562-7881
<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr>

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Office for Civil Rights, Region IV
61 Forsyth Street, S.W.
Atlanta Federal Center, Suite 16170
Atlanta, GA 30303-8909

Attn: Privacy Officer
[REDACTED]

OCR Transaction Number: [REDACTED]

Dear Privacy Officer:

Please be advised that, on May 9, 2014, OCR disclosed to you, [REDACTED], of the applicable Federal Privacy Rule, the Breach Notification Rule, and the Security Rule, and the Breach Notification Rule.

Specifically, on May 9, 2014, OCR disclosed to you, [REDACTED], containing the e-PHI of the applicable Federal Privacy Rule, the Breach Notification Rule, and the Security Rule, and the Breach Notification Rule.

1. The name, title, and address of the individual(s) to whom the information was disclosed.

2. Please indicate the date of the disclosure.

3. Please state how the information was disclosed.

4. Please provide C.F.R. § 164.502(a)(2)(ii) documentation.

5. Please indicate the date of the disclosure.

6. Please provide documentation that the information was disclosed to the individual(s) to whom the information was disclosed.

7. Please provide documentation that the information was disclosed to the individual(s) to whom the information was disclosed.

8. Please provide documentation that the information was disclosed to the individual(s) to whom the information was disclosed.

9. Please submit risk analyses to OCR, C.F.R. § 164.502(a)(2)(ii).

10. Please provide documentation that the information was disclosed to the individual(s) to whom the information was disclosed.

11. The name, title, and address of the individual(s) to whom the information was disclosed.

12. Please indicate the date of the disclosure.

13. Please state how the information was disclosed.

14. Please provide C.F.R. § 164.502(a)(2)(ii) documentation.

15. Please indicate the date of the disclosure.

16. Please provide documentation that the information was disclosed to the individual(s) to whom the information was disclosed.

17. Please provide documentation that the information was disclosed to the individual(s) to whom the information was disclosed.

18. Please provide documentation that the information was disclosed to the individual(s) to whom the information was disclosed.

OCR Transaction Number: [REDACTED]

Page 4

INITIAL DATA REQUEST

In connection with OCR's investigation into the matters raised by the breach report, we request that [REDACTED] provide the following information to OCR within ten (10) business days from receipt of this letter. Please number responses to correspond with the enumerated requests. Electronic copies are encouraged. Please use staples or double-sided pages.

Page 5

THE PRIVACY, SECURITY, AND BREACH NOTIFICATION RULES
ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES FOR NONCOMPLIANCE

The Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information (Privacy Rule) and the Security Standards for the Protection of Electronic Protected Health Information (Security Rule) establish a set of national standards for the use, disclosure, and safeguarding of an individual's health information – called protected health information – by covered entities and business associates. The Privacy Rule sets standards for the use and disclosure of protected health information by covered entities and business associates and also sets standards for providing individuals with privacy rights to understand and control how their health information is used and disclosed. The Security Rule's standards specify a series of administrative, technical, and physical security procedures for covered entities and business associates to use to assure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of electronic protected health information. The Breach Notification Rule's standards require covered entities and business associates to provide notification following a breach of unsecured protected health information. The Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is responsible for administering and enforcing these standards and may conduct complaint investigations and compliance reviews.

Consistent with the principles for achieving compliance provided in the Privacy, Security, and Breach Notification Rules, OCR will seek the cooperation of covered entities and business associates and may provide technical assistance to help them comply voluntarily with the applicable provisions of the Privacy, Security, and Breach Notification Rules. Covered entities and business associates that fail to comply voluntarily with the applicable standards may be subject to civil money penalties. In addition, certain violations of the Privacy, Security, and Breach Notification Rules may be subject to criminal prosecution. These penalty provisions are explained below.

Civil Money Penalties. OCR may impose a penalty on a covered entity or business associate for a failure to comply with an applicable requirement of the Privacy, Security, or Breach Notification Rule. Penalties will vary significantly depending on factors such as the date of the violation, whether the covered entity or business associate knew or should have known of the failure to comply, or whether the covered entity's or business associate's failure to comply was due to willful neglect. Penalties may not exceed a calendar year cap for multiple violations of the same requirement.

For violations occurring on or after February 18, 2009, OCR may impose penalties of \$100 to \$50,000 or more per violation with a calendar year cap of \$1,500,000. A penalty may not be imposed for violations in certain circumstances, such as if the covered entity or business associate establishes to the satisfaction of OCR that:

- the failure to comply was not due to willful neglect, and
- the failure to comply was corrected during a 30-day period after the entity knew or should have known the failure to comply had occurred (unless the period is extended at the discretion of OCR).

Clearwater Insights...

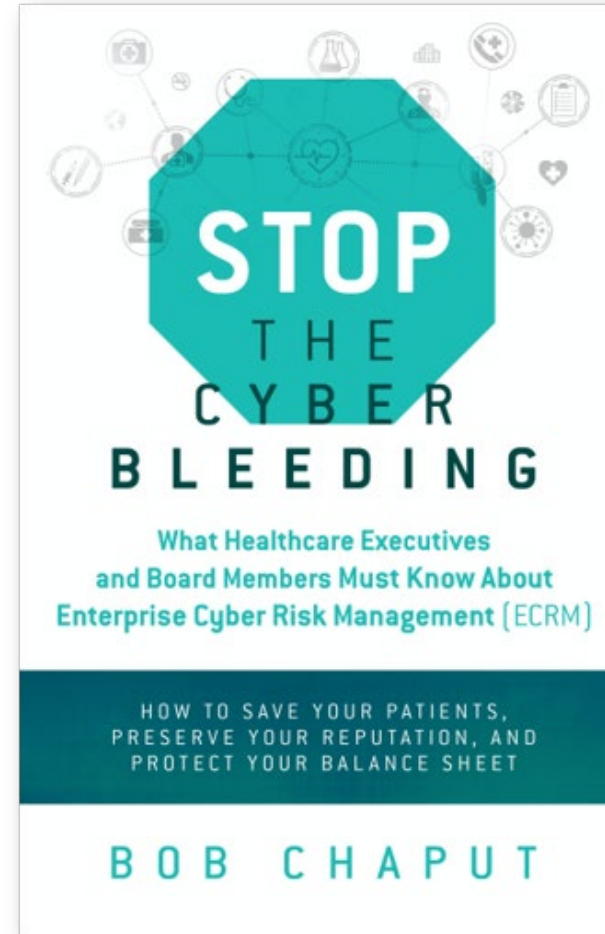


IRM | Analysis®

ENTERPRISE CYBER RISK MANAGEMENT
SOFTWARE

GUIDED TOUR

Wednesday, December 9
@11am CT



INTERESTED IN A COPY?

<https://www.clearwatercompliance.com/stopthecyberbleeding>

Thank You & Questions



Jon Moore
Jon.moore@clearwatercompliance.com



Thank you for taking the time to **complete the survey** when you leave the session. We **value and use your feedback!**



www.ClearwaterCompliance.com

800.704.3394

LinkedIn | [linkedin.com/company/clearwater-compliance-llc/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/clearwater-compliance-llc/)

Twitter | @clearwaterhipaa