

Minnesota Privacy and Security Project

Variations Working Group

Scenario #17 – Public Health Scenario C – Homeless Shelter

Scenario

A homeless man arrives at a county shelter and is found to be a drug addict and in need of medical care. The person does have a primary care provider, and he is sent there for medical care. Primary care provider refers patient to a hospital-affiliated drug treatment clinic for his addiction under a county program. The addiction center must report treatment information back to the county for program reimbursement, and back to the shelter to verify that the person is in treatment. Someone claiming to be a relation of the homeless man requests information from the homeless shelter on all the health services the man has received. The staff at the homeless shelter is working to connect the homeless man with his relative.

Key Issues

- Sharing of drug treatment information with the county programs for reimbursement
- Sharing of drug treatment information with homeless shelters

Privacy and Security Domains

- Domain #4 – Information transmission security or exchange protocols (encryption, etc.) for information that is being exchanged over an electronic communications network.
- Domain #8 - State law restrictions about information types and classes, and the solutions by which electronic personal health information can be viewed and exchanged.
- Domain #9 - Information use and disclosure policies that arise as health care entities share clinical health information electronically.

Questions For Consideration

1. Do you share any drug treatment information with county programs for reimbursement?
2. Do you share any drug treatment information with homeless shelters?
3. If the answer to either Questions 1 or 2 was “yes,” what data are shared and how are the data shared?
4. In thinking about the Privacy and Security Domains (see above), which issues are most relevant for this scenario?