

HIPAA ENFORCEMENT

HIPAA doesn't give patients the right to sue for HIPAA violations, but that doesn't mean practices can comfortably ignore HIPAA requirements. In *United States v. Smith*, federal prosecutors charged a nurse with a class B felony for giving her husband a patient's medical information, knowing her husband intended to use it in litigation against the patient. Smith pled guilty to the felony, and now faces up to 10 years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine at sentencing.

Sidenote: the patient asked the prosecutor to drop the charges; she refused!

Lesson: This stuff is serious!

Share this with your staff...like you, they probably don't realize how serious the government is about protecting patient privacy.

If you have any questions regarding HIPAA rules, please contact B. Kevin Burgess in our Eugene office at (541) 484-2277, in Roseburg at (541) 673-5528, or in Corvallis at (541) 757-1365.

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