

Uses & Disclosures of PHI

Releasing Patient Information to the News Media

HIPAA changes the way we release information to the public and the news media. Reporters must now call with patients' names before OHSU staff can release any information regarding the patient's condition.

Below are some guidelines on how to determine what information you can release to reporters when they call inquiring about OHSU patients.

If the reporter calls WITH a patient's name and the patient has OPTED INTO the facility directory you can release:

1. Correct spelling of the patient's name
2. One-word condition (critical, serious, fair, good or under evaluation)
3. Location in the hospital

Reporters asking for additional information should be referred to OHSU News and Publications at 503 494-8231 or after hours through the OHSU operator.

If the reporter calls WITH a patient's name and the patient has OPTED OUT of the facility directory; the patient is a SECURITY patient; or the reporter calls WITHOUT the patient's name, you can release:

1. Nothing - including whether the patient is here or not
2. You can tell the reporter "We do not have anyone by that name listed in our facility directory. We can only release information about patients listed in the facility directory."

Any additional questions from reporters about patients should be referred to OHSU News and Publications.

REFERRING REPORTERS TO OHSU NEWS AND PUBLICATIONS

Media inquiries that go beyond a basic request for a patient's condition should be referred to OHSU News and Publications. Media relations coordinators are on call to respond to the media at all times. The on-call coordinator can be paged through the OHSU operator after hours or by calling the News and Publications office during business hours at 503 494-8231.

The kind of you media inquires that you may encounter include:

- reporters trying to call directly into patients' rooms or requesting interviews with patients' through the nursing stations
- interviews the patient set up on his/her own with the news media
- reporters call asking to interview family members or the patient's physician
- requests by reporters to discuss OHSU protocols

Please refer all such inquiries to News and Publications.