

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

In other news

When a Midwestern physician retired in 2008, the last thing she expected to find on her doorstep were thousands of patient records just sitting on her residential property—but that finding prompted an \$800,000 judgment against the entity that dumped them there.

The physician hired Parkview Health System, Inc. to transition her patients to new providers when she retired in 2008, according to a June 23 news release on the topic. But instead of filing the physician's records in a safe, HIPAA-compliant location, Parkview took the 5,000 to 8,000 records and left them in cardboard boxes in the physician's driveway, even though Parkview knew she wasn't home. The 71 boxes were in clear view of a public road and were close to a heavily-traveled public shopping area, the HHS news release noted.

In addition to having to pay \$800,000 in resolution, Parkview must revise its policies and procedures, train staff members and give the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) an implementation report.

"All too often we receive complaints of records being discarded or transferred in a manner that puts patient information at risk," said **Christina Heide**, acting deputy director of health information privacy at OCR, in the release. "It is imperative that HIPAA covered entities and their business associates protect patient information during its transfer and disposal."

To read the complete report, visit www.hhs.gov/news/press/2014pres/06/20140623a.html.