

## **Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert**

### **Physician Notes: Questions Abound for Hospital After ESPN Publishes NFL Star's Records**

Although Americans may feel they have the right to know whether their favorite football stars are healthy enough to play in the upcoming season, the law is not on the side of a hospital accused of potentially leaking a New York Giants' records to the media.

Last month, an ESPN reporter published a photo showing the private medical record of New York Giants player Jason Pierre-Paul, who underwent finger amputation after a July 4th fireworks mishap. Although ESPN is not bound by the HIPAA laws, the hospital is—and it quickly came under fire for the alleged release of the photo. Although it remains unclear whether Pierre-Paul personally gave ESPN the photo or whether an employee of Jackson Memorial Hospital leaked it, the hospital immediately went on the defensive after the picture came to light.

"An aggressive internal investigation looking into these allegations is underway," said the hospital's CEO Carlos A. Migoya in a statement. "If these allegations prove to be true, I know the entire Jackson family will share my anguish." The Department of Health and Human Services also noted that it was aware of the situation.

The firestorm underscores the importance of HIPAA training in your practice, and ensuring that all of your staff members are aware of the privacy law. If you haven't updated your staff members on the HIPAA law, now is a good time to use this case as a springboard to your training.