

## Health Information Compliance Alert

### Health Care Philanthropy: HEALTH CARE CHARITIES FEEL PRIVACY PRESSURE

Health care philanthropy groups are pressing the Bush administration to amend a portion of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act privacy rule that many claim could hamper fundraising efforts.

According to the **Association for Healthcare Philanthropy**, non-profit medical fundraising groups have historically had access to a wide range of patients demographic information for use in making targeted appeals. However, under the proposed amendments to the privacy rule such groups would lose access to a crucial piece of data: patients department of service information.

"Without the PDS information," says AHP President and CEO **William McGinly** in remarks prepared for delivery to an April 16 Senate hearing on the proposed changes, "the Privacy Rule would force us to use a shotgun approach to fund raising, increasing costs and reducing the donated dollars available to serve community needs."

The **Association of American Medical Colleges** has also weighed in on the issue. In an April 11 letter to **Department of Health and Human Services** Secretary **Tommy Thompson**, the association argued that restricting access to patients PDS data "creates a serious impediment to the fundraising that is essential for academic institutions to sustain their core missions of teaching, research, patient care and community service."