

## Health Information Compliance Alert

### Reader Question: How Can You Make Patients More Comfortable With EHRs?

**Question:** Some of our patients have expressed concerns over our increasing use of electronic health records (EHRs), especially with all the news reports about healthcare breaches. How can we reassure our patients that we're doing everything possible to keep their information safe?

**Answer:** "Everything is moving electronic," noted attorney **Mary Beth Gettins** of **Gettins' Law** in an Oct. 30 blog posting. "It is not a choice. Paper was yesterday."

But how can you put your patients at ease with EHRs? Gettins referenced the following tips from the **Consumer Electronics Association's** "Guiding Principles on the Privacy and Security of Personal Wellness Data:"

**Establish clear policies and give notice:** Draft clear privacy and security policies, and educate your staff on those policies. Give notice to your patients, and post a notice about your EHR-related policies at your office and on your website.

**Offer the ability to opt out:** Give your patients the ability to opt out of advertising and electronic communications.

**Educate patients:** Let your patients know the suppliers, vendors, and other third parties with whom you share their information.

**Provide access and control:** Give patients access to their information and a way to update, delete, amend, and correct their data when appropriate.