

Health Information Compliance Alert

Reader Questions: How Can You Find Out If Your Practice Management Software Is Encrypted?

Question: How can I find out whether our practice management software is encrypted? I know that the system is password-protected, but I'm not sure about encryption.

Answer: First, you will need to do a little research about your practice management software, advised attorney **Mary Beth Gettins** of **Gettins' Law** in a recent blog posting. Find your vendor's website and read up on the "fine print" of your practice management software.

Then, run a "Command Prompt" on your computer to identify stored encrypted files, Gettins instructed. Remember, to do this you must be logged in to the computer as the administrator. Follow these steps:

1. Click on the Window icon on the bottom of your screen and type "Command Prompt" into the search box in the pop-up window. A black box should appear on your computer screen.
2. After the cursor in the black box, type "cipher/u" and hit Enter. You should now see a list of the encrypted files saved on your computer.
3. Review the list of encrypted files to determine if practice management files are included on the list.

Beware: Keep in mind that "encrypted practice management software is not the magic pill for information security [and] should not be the only safeguard or sole security management plan," Gettins warned.