

## Health Information Compliance Alert

### Reader Questions: NPPs For Mother's Little Helpers

Question: A mother walks into a provider's office with her four children for the first time. Must the mother sign four separate NPP acknowledgement forms for each of her children or can she simply sign one form for all four kids?

Florida Subscriber

Answer: The mother "needs to acknowledge receipt on behalf of each of the kids because she is the personal representative of the children," states **John Gilliland** with **Gilliland & Caudill** in Indianapolis. "Now that means she could sign four different written acknowledgements or you could have one acknowledgement where she acknowledges it for all four kids." Either format would meet the legal requirements of HIPAA, he maintains.

Which format you choose should depend on what's administratively easiest for your practice, says Gilliland. Since most practices likely keep their records organized by the name of each child, it might make most sense to have her sign four separate forms, he notes. "So it's an extra 30 seconds now, but it'll save a lot of time later" should your staff need to track down or retrieve the acknowledgement form for one specific child, he says.