

Health Information Compliance Alert

Reader Questions: Pick Up Rx For Family Members

Question: Is it still okay to allow a patient's family members to pick up prescriptions, or does that violate HIPAA's Privacy Rule? Also, what about friends?

Kansas Subscriber

Answer: Yes, friends and family are allowed to pick up prescriptions for patients. A pharmacist is permitted to use his or her professional judgment and "experience with common practice" to determine if it is in the patient's best interest to allow others to pick up his/her prescriptions, according to the Web site for the **Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS).

So, if a person shows up to the pharmacy counter and asks for a specific prescription for a specific person, the pharmacist may consider that this person has verified that s/he is involved with the patient's care. The patient does not need to provide the pharmacist with names of friends or relatives in advance.