

## Health Information Compliance Alert

### Sample Document: GIVE PATIENTS PREFERENCES WITH PHONE MESSAGES

The benefits of proper and efficient communication with your patients is twofold: It's essential to your organization's success to provide patients with options for communication of their PHI; and it helps you meet HIPAA's compliance requirements to boot.

HIPAA's privacy rule addresses how covered entities can disclose PHI to patients; it also requires CEs to provide alternative means of such communications: "A covered health care provider must permit individuals to request and must accommodate reasonable requests by individuals to receive communications of [PHI] from the covered health care provider by alternative means or alternative locations" ( 164.522 (b) (1)).

With those rules in mind, many CEs have begun creating their own documents asking the patient how he or she would prefer to receive communications of PHI. **Lin Carmichael**, an administrative official with **Chapel Hill Pediatric Psychology**, created a Preference for Communication document for patients' parents. The document will be part of CHPP's Parent Questionnaire, which in turn is part of the initial paperwork presented to patients' parents when they first enter the office. The one-page-long document outlines how the patient - in this case, the patient's parents - prefers to be contacted.

