

# Health Information Compliance Alert

## Studies and Surveys: AHA TAKES THE PRIVACY PULSE

In a recent survey commissioned by the **American Hospital Association**, 86 percent of respondents said that it is an "unnecessary burden" to require a sick person to sign a 10-page legal document when they see a doctor, nurse or pick up a prescription.

The survey, which polled more than 900 consumers, was included in an April 23 letter to Congress expressing the AHA's support for proposed modifications to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability's privacy rule. Among the surveys other findings:

1. 85 percent of respondents agreed that the elderly would be most impacted by a consent requirement because they often see numerous physicians, and often send someone to pick up their prescriptions;
2. 85 percent thought that time in a doctor's office should be spent on patient care instead of paperwork;
3. 77 percent agreed that a patient in a hospital should not have to read a privacy notice and sign a consent form before having a test scheduled;
4. 72 percent of people surveyed that that money spent on getting consent would be better spent on caring for patients;
5. 74 percent thought it would be a "hassle" to sign a consent form before every visit to a doctor, hospital or pharmacy; and
6. 60 percent of respondents who reviewed a consent form and a 10-page privacy notice thought the original privacy rule wouldn't "enhance" their medical privacy.