

Health Information Compliance Alert

These Health IT Acronyms Are Often Misused ☐ This Handy List Explains the Differences

Many use EMR and EHR interchangeably, but they actually refer to different things. The same goes for ePHI and PHI ☐ they are similar, but they cover distinct areas of concern under HIPAA.

Take a look at these five commonly mixed up terms:

EMR ☐ An Electronic Medical Record is the electronic version of an individual patient's paper chart for a practice. This digital resource maintains the medical and treatment history of a patient at that practice only.

EHR ☐ An Electronic Health Record is also a record of a patient's health and treatment history, but it goes beyond a single practice. An EHR includes all the providers and care that a patient has had across specialties and healthcare platforms like hospital visits, lab work, imaging, and more. An EHR encourages the sharing of the patient's health information from the coordination of care amongst clinicians to access by the patient himself.

PHR ☐ A Personal Health Record contains similar information as EMRs and EHRs but are managed by the patients and often include family history and care.

PHI ☐ Protected Health Information is any patient information collected by a provider during any health interaction that identifies a patient personally. PHI was originally outlined in the HIPAA Privacy Rule and is protected under it.

ePHI ☐ Electronic Protected Health Information is all the identifiable health information of an individual that a healthcare provider creates, receives, maintains or transmits in electronic form. ePHI is distinctly defined and protected under the HIPAA Security Rule.