



STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Corning Tower

The Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza

Albany, New York 12237

March 9, 2007

Dear Administrator:

The information system used by your hospital to report birth data to the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) now includes electronic access to the complete set of data that you have submitted for your facility. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the availability of that data and to clarify your hospital's responsibilities in its disclosure.

Birth data is submitted by your hospital through the Statewide Perinatal Data System (SPDS). The Department creates a copy of birth data reported by your hospital and makes it available to your hospital through the Department's secure hospital communication channel, the Health Provider Network (HPN). The birth data contain identifying information on each birth and are intended to support your facility's quality improvement activities.

The birth data provided to you by the Department are entitled to the same protection as the original data in your medical files. Consequently, any release by your organization of identifying data contained in the provided file must comply with applicable state and federal laws, including the HIPAA Privacy Rule.

The data in the NYSDOH provided data file may be used in the hospital's internal quality improvement activities. RPC representative(s) serving on your hospital's quality assurance committee may access confidential patient information in their role as members of that committee. Disclosures of birth data outside your facility are limited by the SPDS regulations (Title X, Sections 400.22 and 721.9) which prohibit disclosure of identifying birth data except as specifically authorized.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Peter Carucci
Director
Bureau of Production Systems Management

Endorsement:

Guthrie Birkhead, M.D., MPH
Director
Center for Community Health

cc: Chief Information Officer
HPN Coordinator
RPC Coordinator

Attachments