

## Data Practices Release of Information Barriers to Patient Centered Care

### Example 1

Mary is 85 years young. Doctor Anderson has referred her to Clinic X, a tertiary care center, for specialty cardiac care. An appointment has been made for the following week. She received a letter from Clinic X asking her to have a copy of her medical records sent prior to the visit. She called Doctor Anderson to request her records be sent. She was informed she needed to sign a release of information. She could download the form from the website and email it back to them. They would then send the records.

Mary does not have a computer. She cannot download the release of information form. She needs to drive 70 miles round trip to go to the clinic to sign the form in order for the records to get to Clinic X before her appointment.

After the specialty care evaluation, it was determined follow-up care could be provided in her home community. The local cardiologist requested a copy of her clinical records. Once again she had to either drive to the clinic to sign the form or wait for it to arrive in the mail, then mail it back, then await the processing time to get the records sent to the local clinic.

Issue: Federal law allows providers to release protected health information for treatment, payment, or operations without client written consent. Minnesota Medical Records Act and the Minnesota Government Data Practices require the patient's written consent to release information to another entity.

### Example 2

Health Care Reform is advocating community care teams to address the health needs of persons with chronic health conditions. In order to implement this community care team, the patient must provide in writing release of information forms to each of the entities on the care team and identify what information can be shared with each team member. Providers must be cognizant of what information can be released to each provider. Steve is a patient with a cardiac condition who has had a hip replacement. The clinic needs to have a release of information form to share protected health information with:

- A Family Member
- Public Health or Human Services if requesting funding for Long Term Services and Support
- Provider of a Personal Alert System
- Provider of a Home Monitoring System
- Provider of Home Delivered Meals
- Provider of Home Care, Assisted Living, or Nursing Home level of care
- Provider of Behavioral Health Services
- Provider of Physical Therapy Services
- Provider of Community Paramedic Services
- Provider of Durable Medical Equipment
- Provider for Health Information Exchange

This requires Steve to sign 10 forms and may still not allow the team to talk to one another!