

Notice for Tampa General Hospital Patients Regarding Privacy Incident

Tampa General Hospital (TGH) is committed to maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of our patients' information. Regrettably, this notice concerns an incident involving some of that information.

On August 14, 2014 TGH was notified by the Tampa Police Department (TPD) that during a traffic stop and arrest of an individual, TGH patient documents were obtained. We received the documents from TPD and immediately began an expanded internal investigation in conjunction with the TPD. Patients may reach TPD at 813-354-6600; the TPD report number assigned is Go# 2014-216781, follow the prompts in the recorded messages. Our investigation determined that patient information may have been accessed including patients' names, addresses, dates of birth, admitting diagnoses, names of insurance payers and in some instances, social security numbers. Medical records were not included in this incident and patient care is not affected. TGH terminated the individual.

This incident did not affect all TGH patients, only certain patients treated from October 3, 2011 to August 7, 2014.

We want to assure our patients that we are taking this matter very seriously and are actively cooperating with law enforcement in their investigation. We began sending letters to affected patients on September 12, 2014. We have also established a dedicated call center for patients to call with any questions. If you believe you are affected but have not received a letter by September 30, please call 1-877-202-4625, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time. (Closed on U.S. observed holidays.) Please be prepared to provide the following ten digit reference number when calling: 6167090314.

We deeply regret any inconvenience this may cause our patients. To help prevent this from happening in the future, we continually communicate to and educate our staff on the importance of protecting and securing patient information; emphasizing the importance of reporting any unusual staff behavior as we enhance procedures to prevent and detect misuse of patient information. We have also implemented technology that blocks patient information based on an employee's job description, including limiting access to patients' social security numbers.