

Why can't I access my own health information directly through a Munson Healthcare electronic health record?

The use of Munson Healthcare's electronic health record (EHR) is restricted to only accessing information needed to do your job, i.e., to support patient treatment, payment, and healthcare operations. Accessing your own medical records in a Munson Healthcare EHR is a violation of our policy.

Munson Healthcare prioritizes the privacy and security of its patient data and has extensive measures in place to protect its information.

Areas of particular concern with our previous EHR access policy:

- *Record modifications:* There is potential for modifications (either accidental or intentional) to the patient record, thus impacting the integrity of the medical information.
- *Information integrity:* Beyond HIPAA violations, when staff members or physicians freely access their own records it raises other issues. For example, if the physician who is treating the employee knows the employee is freely accessing his own record, the physician may have difficulty providing an honest assessment of the employee (patient) in the record.

Why can't I access health information of a family/friend who had granted me e-authorization access to their electronic health record directly through a Munson Healthcare electronic health record?

The use of Munson Healthcare's electronic health record (EHR) is restricted to only accessing information needed to do your job. Accessing family or friends' medical records without a job-related need in a Munson Healthcare EHR is a violation of our policy.

Areas of particular concern with our previous EHR access policy:

- *Entire patient record access:* Once access has been granted by an e-authorization, you can view the entire record, not just a lab result or a recent office visit note. We are unable to limit the amount of medical information a person can see once the EHR is opened.
- *Record modifications:* There is potential for modifications (either accidental or intention) to the patient record, thus impacting the integrity of the medical information.
- *Privacy issues:* If the patient forgets he/she has an e-authorization in place and/or has not updated the e-authorization when life circumstances have changed (e.g., divorce), this can create privacy issues.

Appropriate access and use of medical records systems is continuously monitored by Munson Healthcare.

How can I access my medical records?

- **Munson Healthcare Patient Portals:** Your medical information can be accessed through an MHC Patient Portal. For more information, [click here](#).
- **Submit a Medical Information Request:**
 - *Hospital:* Contact your hospital's Health Information Management Department to submit a written request for your medical information.
 - *MHC Physician Practice Network:* Contact the practice where services were received to submit a written request for the medical information.

FAQs on MHC EHR Use

MHC EHR Systems

My father wants me to monitor or obtain his medical records for him. How can I do this?

- **Munson Healthcare Patient Portals:** Have your friend/family member grant you proxy access to their MHC Patient Portal (note that all MHC patient portals support proxy access). For more information, [click here](#).
- **Submit a Medical Information Request:**
 - *Hospital:* Contact the hospital's Health Information Management Department to submit a written request for the medical information.
 - *MHC Physician Practice Network:* Contact the practice where services were received to submit a written request for the medical information.

Can a licensed independent practitioner (LIP) order their own diagnostic testing or prescriptions?

No. It is a conflict of interest when a LIP orders their own diagnostic testing or prescribes medications for themselves, particularly from a billing standpoint for establishing medical necessity. This is against the Medical Staff Policy for all Munson Healthcare locations. It is also against Medical Staff Policy to treat immediate family members and close friends. [Treatment of Immediate Family Members, including Close Friends and Employees](#)

Accessing my own Protected Health Information (PHI) is not a HIPAA privacy violation, so why can't I?

It is correct that accessing one's own PHI is not a HIPAA violation. Under HIPAA, employees have a right to request access to their own PHI in the employer health records, but they do not have a right under HIPAA to utilize their login credentials to access the PHI. Healthcare organizations can impose reasonable requirements to access PHI (e.g., obtaining the information from the HIM Department after a Request for Access).

Employees would not typically be involved in providing or documenting their own care or treatment, so access to their own PHI would not be covered by access for Treatment, Payment or Healthcare Operations reasons (job-related needs), or for Public Interest and Benefit activities.