

INFORMATION REGARDING THE RECENT BREACH OF CONFIDENTIAL PATIENT INFORMATION

Frequently Asked Questions

We at MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. MULTI-SERVICE AMBULATORY CARE CENTER (MLK MACC) are deeply committed to ensuring the privacy and security of our patients' protected health information. Although strict protective measures are taken to protect your health information, we regret to inform you that the privacy of demographic information that is considered protected health information may have been breached.

What happened?

On or about July 29, 2010, MLK MACC became aware of a potential breach of some of our patients' demographic and payor information when staff noticed that some boxes of documents were missing from a secured area within the facility where the boxes had been stored. An investigation by MLK MACC staff was launched to locate the missing documents. When MLK MACC staff's investigation revealed the boxes were taken for their paper value the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department conducted an investigation and on September 9, 2010 the Sheriff's department filed criminal charges against the individual believed to have taken the boxes for their paper value.

Whose information was involved?

The missing documents contained demographic and payor information of all patients who were registered and seen at MLK MACC, between January 1, 2008 and September 30, 2008.

What type of information was listed on the documents?

The documents contained the patients' demographic information consisting of the patients' full name, address, city, state, and zip code, date of birth, gender, medical record number, MLK MACC account number, phone number, and third party payor code. Please note, the documents did **not** contain social security numbers, driver license numbers, banking or medical information regarding the care or treatment the individual received at MLK MACC.

Can you tell me if my confidential information is involved?

If you were registered and seen as a patient at MLK MACC between January 1, 2008 and September 30, 2008, the privacy and confidentiality of your demographic information may have been breached.

What could I do to protect my information?

While MLK MACC has no knowledge as to whether your information was actually accessed or viewed, there are steps you can take to protect yourself:

- Some state laws allow you to place a security freeze on your credit reports. This would prohibit a credit reporting agency from releasing any information from your credit report without your written permission.
- If you believe that you have been a victim of identity theft and you provide the credit reporting agencies with a valid police report, they cannot charge you to place, lift, or remove a security freeze on your credit reports.
- You may also want to place a fraud alert on your credit report. This can help prevent someone from opening additional accounts in your name or changing your existing accounts. You can call any of the three major credit bureaus listed below to place the fraud alert request.
- You should also order a copy of your credit report. You are entitled to receive one free credit report per year from each of the three major credit bureaus.

Equifax

P.O. Box 740241
Atlanta, GA 30374
(800) 525-6285
Equifax.com

Experian

P.O. Box 9532
Allen, TX 75013
(888) 397-3742
Experian.com

Trans Union Corp.

Fraud Assistance
Division
P.O. Box 6790
Fullerton, CA 92834
(800) 916-8800
TransUnion.com

What is MLK MACC doing to address this situation?

As a result of MLK MACC and the Sheriff's joint investigation, on September 9, 2010, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department arrested a suspect who was charged with commercial burglary in the theft of the boxes. In addition, MLK MACC implemented immediate enhanced security measures and will be conducting patient privacy retraining for all workforce members. When MLK MACC completed their investigation, a directive to be vigilant in our efforts to protect our patients' health information was immediately sent to all workforce members.

How can I be confident that MLK MACC and the Department of Health Services (DHS) takes the security of patient information seriously?

MLK MACC and DHS are truly committed to maintaining the privacy of our patients' protected health information, and have numerous safeguards in place. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused you.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this issue?

MLK MACC has set up a separate HIPAA information line (877) 418-6381 to provide you the opportunity to leave a message and receive a return call for further assistance. This information line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for your convenience. You may also want to visit www.dhs.lacounty.gov for further information.