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**Subject:** HIPAA and Cloud Storage  
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Good afternoon, HCC Contacts, HCC Business Managers, HCC Researchers, and HCC Tier 1s/IT Representatives –

Please share the following reminder regarding **cloud storage** with the workforce members in your areas, including trainees, who store PHI of our patients or research participants:

HIPAA requires that all PHI be stored in a manner that protects the PHI from unauthorized access, and it prohibits making PHI accessible to individuals who are not authorized to access it.

-This specifically includes not sharing PHI with cloud storage vendors that are not approved by use by campus IT, such as Dropbox. (See approved products below.)

-Failing to protect PHI is a violation of HIPAA, as is sharing PHI with a vendor or putting PHI in a location where a vendor can access it, *unless IT has approved the vendor's product and appropriate contracts between the University and the vendor are in place.*

\$\$\$ More than one health care entity has been fined several million dollars this year for HIPAA violations that included sharing PHI with a cloud storage vendor without having a BAA in place. \$\$\$

Each campus IT department has designated an approved cloud storage product for PHI. Researchers and providers desiring to use cloud storage for PHI must use an IT-approved product.

1. Employees and trainees may contact their Tier 1, IT Representative, or IT Security for more information about their campus-specific IT- approved storage solution:

Health Sciences Center –Sync & Share. See [https://ouitservices.service-now.com/kb\\_view.do?sysparm\\_article=KB0010822](https://ouitservices.service-now.com/kb_view.do?sysparm_article=KB0010822) for information about Sync & Share. HSC employees and trainees also may store patient and research participant data on secure University servers or secure (encrypted) drives.

Norman Campus - MS Office 365 (*after* the employee or trainee submits a request through IT Catalog for PHI storage within MS Office 365). Contact <http://itscnorman.ou.edu/portfolio/security-consultation/>. NC employees and trainees also may store patient and research participant data on secure University servers or secure (unencrypted) drives.

Tulsa Campus HSC – SharePoint; network file shares, such as individual drives (U:); and departmental share drives (S:, T:, etc.).

Tulsa Campus NC – Network file shares, such as individual drives (U:), and departmental share

drives (S:, T:, etc.).

2. If an employee or trainee wants to use an external storage vendor or cloud service provider for PHI, the employee or trainee must use a vendor or product approved by IT. **No PHI may be stored with cloud storage vendors that IT has not approved.**

Thank you for your assistance in ensuring that your workforce members, including trainees, receive this follow-up reminder to comply with these cloud storage requirements. I appreciate your help.

*Jill Bush Raines*

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and University Privacy Official

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