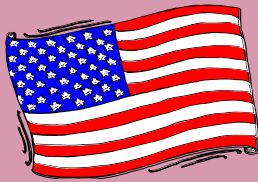


*A Newsletter
From the Desk
of
Rick Martin*

July/Aug 2013



*America
Land of the Free
Home of the Brave*

BMM 9/11/2001

COMSTAR

Ambulance Billing Service

HHS-HIPAA Final Rule Compliance Deadline 9/23/13

Dear Valued Client,

If you are receiving this e-mail, it is because I have not received any response from you regarding the update of your services Business Associate Agreement (BAA) with Comstar. Note, this needed update applies to any other vendor that you provide access to your patient's protected health information (PHI). Recent changes in the regulations pertaining to your ambulance service require updated language in all BAA's.

Though having an updated BAA by 9/23/13 is a requirement of your service, Comstar is being both proactive and supportive of your services needs by :

- 1) Providing notice of the pending deadline
- 2) Providing a BAA document for your use (though you can certainly use your own compliant BAA document if you have one)

Please read the following page for details on the item. I strongly recommend you take action as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Rick

COMSTAR
AMBULANCE
BILLING SERVICE

8 Turcotte Memorial Drive
Rowley, MA 01969

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Fax: 978-356-2721

We are on the web at
www.ComstarBilling.com

The more a man
knows, the more
he forgives.

**Catherine the
Great**

HHS-HIPAA Final Rule Compliance Deadline 9/23/13

Business Associate Agreements

Under HIPAA, your service is required to have a Business Associate Agreement (BAA) with any party with whom it shares or gives access to its patient's PHI. Comstar meets the definition of a Business Associate of your service under HIPAA. The final rule issued on January 17th includes additional language requirements likely not found in your current BAA. To assist you with your compliance, With advice from our EMS attorney. Comstar has produced a generic BAA for your use. The follow is a link this BAA: <https://www.comstarbilling.com/downloads.html>

Please print, fill in your service name, the date, sign and send to me for signature. I will then e-mail you a signed copy for your files. . All clients have a responsibility to take action on this item. Please contact me anytime with questions. Please take note, having a BAA with Comstar and other BAs whom you give access to your patients PHI is a requirement of your service that requires action by your service in order to be compliant. If you prefer not to use the BAA offered by Comstar, please contact your attorney for a BAA and send it to me for my signature. The HHS published date for your services compliance with this requirement is 9/23/13.

Notice of Privacy Practices

The Final Rule made some changes to the language requirements of your services Notice of Privacy Practices (NPP). Note, all services must have an NPP and give a copy to each patient transported.

The following is a link to Comstar's NPP. <http://www.comstarbilling.com/privacy.html>. Again, to assist you with compliance, and with the advise of our EMS attorney, Comstar has produced a generic NPP for your use. The document, in MSWord format, can be found at the following link: https://www.comstarbilling.com/Documents/client_npp_letter.doc. For those clients who subscribe to Comstar's NPP mailing service, we've updated our forms, no action is required on your part.

**Contact me anytime
with questions on these
_BAA and NPP matters.**

Rick.Martin@comstarbilling.com or 978-771-6482