



Sending Postcard Reminders

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HIPAA Tip: The Use of Postcards

Q: Can our office use postcards as reminders for appointments?

A: HIPAA does not preclude the use of appointment reminder postcards. The nature of your practice determines what is appropriate. If you are sending appointment reminders for a general medical practice, a postcard reminder is acceptable as long as it does not contain any information about the specific type of appointment or reason for treatment. The postcard, however, should contain no more information than time and date of appointment and the physician's name and contact number.

However, if the name of your practice or facility would provide information about a patient's condition (e.g., XYZ Cancer Hospital or Community AIDS Clinic), send the reminder notice in an envelope to protect your patients' privacy. The return address on the envelope should not include the name of the clinic or hospital in these situations.

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