

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2011**

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**SENATE BILL 607\***

Short Title: Conform Medical Record Laws. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Stein.

Referred to: Health Care.

April 19, 2011

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO CONFORM MEDICAL RECORD CONFIDENTIALITY LAWS.  
3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 90-85.36 reads as rewritten:

5 "**§ 90-85.36. Availability of pharmacy records.**

6 (a) Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c) below, written or electronic  
7 prescription orders on file in a pharmacy or other place where prescriptions are dispensed are  
8 not public records and any person having custody of or access to the prescription orders may  
9 divulge the contents or provide a copy only to the following persons:

- 10 (1) An adult patient for whom the prescription was issued or a person who is  
11 legally appointed guardian of that person;
- 12 (2) An emancipated minor patient for whom the prescription order was issued or  
13 a person who is the legally appointed guardian of that patient;
- 14 (3) An unemancipated minor patient for whom the prescription order was issued  
15 when the minor's consent is sufficient to authorize treatment of the condition  
16 for which the prescription was issued;
- 17 (4) A parent or person in loco parentis of an unemancipated minor patient for  
18 whom the prescription order was issued when the minor's consent is not  
19 sufficient to authorize treatment for the condition for which the prescription  
20 is issued;
- 21 (5) The licensed practitioner who issued the prescription;
- 22 (6) The licensed practitioner who is treating the patient for whom the  
23 prescription was issued;
- 24 (7) A pharmacist who is providing pharmacy services to the patient for whom  
25 the prescription was issued;
- 26 (8) Anyone who presents a written authorization for the release of pharmacy  
27 information signed by the patient or his legal representative;
- 28 (9) Any person authorized by subpoena, court order or statute;
- 29 (10) Any firm, association, partnership, business trust, corporation or company  
30 charged by law or by contract with the responsibility of providing for or  
31 paying for medical care for the patient for whom the prescription order was  
32 issued;
- 33 (11) A member or designated employee of the Board;
- 34 (12) The executor, administrator or spouse of a deceased patient for whom the  
35 prescription order was issued;



1 (13) Researchers and surveyors who have approval from the Board. The Board  
2 shall issue this approval when it determines that there are adequate  
3 safeguards to protect the confidentiality of the information contained in the  
4 prescription orders and that the researchers or surveyors will not publicly  
5 disclose any information that identifies any person; ~~or~~

6 (14) The person owning the pharmacy or his authorized ~~agent~~; ~~agent~~; or

7 (15) A HIPAA covered entity or a health care provider who is not a covered  
8 entity for purposes of treatment, payment, or health care operations to the  
9 extent that disclosure is permitted or required by applicable State or federal  
10 law.

11 (b) A pharmacist may disclose any information to any person only when he reasonably  
12 determines that the disclosure is necessary to protect the life or health of any person.

13 (c) Records required to be kept by G.S. 90-93(d) (Schedule V) are not public records  
14 and shall be disclosed at the pharmacist's discretion."

15 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 122C-55 reads as rewritten:

16 **"§ 122C-55. Exceptions; care and treatment.**

17 (a) ~~Any area or State facility or the psychiatric service of the University of North~~  
18 ~~Carolina Hospitals at Chapel Hill~~ may share confidential information regarding any client of  
19 that facility with any other ~~area or State facility or the psychiatric service of the University of~~  
20 ~~North Carolina Hospitals at Chapel Hill~~ when necessary to coordinate appropriate and effective  
21 care, treatment or habilitation of the client. For the purposes of this subsection, coordinate  
22 means the provision, coordination, or management of mental health, developmental disabilities,  
23 and substance abuse services and related services by one or more facilities and includes the  
24 referral of a client from one facility to another.

25 (a1) Any facility may share confidential information regarding any client of that facility  
26 with the Secretary, and the Secretary may share confidential information regarding any client  
27 with a facility when necessary to conduct quality assessment and improvement activities or to  
28 coordinate appropriate and effective care, treatment or habilitation of the client. For purposes of  
29 ~~this subsection~~ subsection (a6), and subsection ~~(a6)~~ (a7) of this section, the purposes  
30 or activities for which confidential information may be disclosed include, but are not limited to,  
31 case management and care coordination, disease management, outcomes evaluation, the  
32 development of clinical guidelines and protocols, the development of care management plans  
33 and systems, population-based activities relating to improving or reducing health care costs,  
34 and the provision, coordination, or management of mental health, developmental disabilities,  
35 and substance abuse services and related services. As used in this section, "facility" includes an  
36 LME and "Secretary" includes the Department's Community Care of North Carolina Program  
37 or other primary care case management programs that contract with the Department to provide  
38 a primary care case management program for recipients of publicly funded health and related  
39 services.

40 (a2) Any area or State facility or the psychiatric service of the University of North  
41 Carolina Hospitals at Chapel Hill may share confidential information regarding any client of  
42 that facility with any other area facility or State facility or the psychiatric service of the  
43 University of North Carolina Hospitals at Chapel Hill when necessary to conduct payment  
44 activities relating to an individual served by the facility. Payment activities are activities  
45 undertaken by a facility to obtain or provide reimbursement for the provision of services and  
46 may include, but are not limited to, determinations of eligibility or coverage, coordination of  
47 benefits, determinations of cost-sharing amounts, claims management, claims processing,  
48 claims adjudication, claims appeals, billing and collection activities, medical necessity reviews,  
49 utilization management and review, precertification and preauthorization of services,  
50 concurrent and retrospective review of services, and appeals related to utilization management  
51 and review.

1 (a3) Whenever there is reason to believe that a client is eligible for benefits through a  
2 Department program, any State or area facility or the psychiatric service of the University of  
3 North Carolina Hospitals at Chapel Hill may share confidential information regarding any  
4 client of that facility with the Secretary, and the Secretary may share confidential information  
5 regarding any client with an area facility or State facility or the psychiatric services of the  
6 University of North Carolina Hospitals at Chapel Hill. Disclosure is limited to that information  
7 necessary to establish initial eligibility for benefits, determine continued eligibility over time,  
8 and obtain reimbursement for the costs of services provided to the client.

9 (a4) An area authority or county program may share confidential information regarding  
10 any client with any area facility, and any area facility may share confidential information  
11 regarding any client of that facility with the area authority or county program, when the area  
12 authority or county program determines the disclosure is necessary to develop, manage,  
13 monitor, or evaluate the area authority's or county program's network of qualified providers as  
14 provided in G.S. 122C-115.2(b)(1) b., G.S. 122C-141(a), the State Plan, and rules of the  
15 Secretary. For the purposes of this subsection, the purposes or activities for which confidential  
16 information may be disclosed include, but are not limited to, quality assessment and  
17 improvement activities, provider accreditation and staff credentialing, developing contracts and  
18 negotiating rates, investigating and responding to client grievances and complaints, evaluating  
19 practitioner and provider performance, auditing functions, on-site monitoring, conducting  
20 consumer satisfaction studies, and collecting and analyzing performance data.

21 (a5) Any area facility may share confidential information with any other area facility  
22 regarding an applicant when necessary to determine whether the applicant is eligible for area  
23 facility services. For the purpose of this subsection, the term "applicant" means an individual  
24 who contacts an area facility for services.

25 (a6) When necessary to conduct quality assessment and improvement activities or to  
26 coordinate appropriate and effective care, treatment, or habilitation of the client, ~~a DHHS~~  
27 ~~primary care case manager~~ the Department's Community Care of North Carolina Program, or  
28 other primary care case management program, may disclose confidential information acquired  
29 pursuant to subsection (a1) of this section to a health care provider or other entity that has  
30 entered into a written agreement with the Department's Community Care of North Carolina  
31 Program, or other primary care case management program, to participate in the care  
32 management support network and systems developed and maintained by the primary care case  
33 manager for the purpose of coordinating and improving the quality of care for recipients of  
34 publicly funded health and related services. Health care providers and other entities receiving  
35 confidential information from the Department's Community Care of North Carolina Program or  
36 other primary care case management program pursuant to this subsection may use and disclose  
37 the information ~~as authorized by G.S. 122C-53 through G.S. 122C-56 or as permitted or~~  
38 ~~required by other applicable State or federal law.~~ when necessary to conduct quality assessment  
39 and improvement activities or to coordinate appropriate and effective care, treatment, or  
40 habilitation of the client.

41 (a7) A facility may share confidential information with one or more health care providers  
42 that are covered entities for the same purposes set forth in subsection (a1) of this section.  
43 Before making disclosures under this subsection, the facility shall inform the client that the  
44 facility may make such disclosures unless the client objects in writing. If the client objects in  
45 writing, the disclosures otherwise permitted by this subsection are prohibited. A covered entity  
46 receiving confidential information from a facility under this subsection may use and disclose  
47 the information when necessary to conduct quality assessment and improvement activities or to  
48 coordinate appropriate and effective care, treatment, or habilitation of the client. For the  
49 purposes of this subsection, the terms 'covered entity' and 'health care provider' have the  
50 meaning given those terms in 45 Code of Federal Regulations § 160.103.

51 ...."

1           **SECTION 3.** G.S. 130A-12 reads as rewritten:

2    "**§ 130A-12. Confidentiality of records.**

3       All records containing privileged patient medical information, information protected under  
4 45 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 160 and 164, and information collected under the  
5 authority of Part 4 of Article 5 of this Chapter that are in the possession of the Department of  
6 Health and Human Services, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, or local  
7 health departments shall be confidential and shall not be public records pursuant to G.S. 132-1.  
8 Information contained in the records may be disclosed only when disclosure is authorized or  
9 required by State or federal law. Notwithstanding ~~G.S. 8-53 or G.S. 130A-143~~, G.S. 8-53, the  
10 information contained in the records may be disclosed for purposes of treatment, payment,  
11 research, or health care operations to the extent that disclosure is permitted under 45  
12 Code of Federal Regulations §§ 164.506 and 164.512(i). For purposes of this section, the terms  
13 "treatment," "payment," "research," and "health care operations" have the meanings given those  
14 terms in 45 Code of Federal Regulations § 164.501."

15           **SECTION 4.** G.S. 130A-143 reads as rewritten:

16    "**§ 130A-143. Confidentiality of records.**

17       All information and records, whether publicly or privately maintained, that identify a  
18 person who has AIDS virus infection or who has or may have a disease or condition required to  
19 be reported pursuant to the provisions of this Article shall be strictly confidential. This  
20 information shall not be released or made public except under the following circumstances:

- 21       (1) Release is made of specific medical or epidemiological information for  
22       statistical purposes in a way that no person can be identified;
- 23       (2) Release is made of all or part of the medical record with the written consent  
24       of the person or persons identified or their guardian;
- 25       (3) Release is made ~~to health care personnel providing medical care to the~~  
26       ~~patient;~~ for purposes of treatment, payment, research, or health care  
27       operations to the extent that disclosure is permitted under 45 Code of Federal  
28       Regulations §§ 164.506 and 164.512(i). For purposes of this section, the  
29       terms 'treatment,' 'payment,' 'research' and 'health care operations' have the  
30       meaning given those terms in 45 Code of Federal Regulations § 164.501;
- 31       (4) Release is necessary to protect the public health and is made as provided by  
32       the Commission in its rules regarding control measures for communicable  
33       diseases and conditions;
- 34       (5) Release is made pursuant to other provisions of this Article;
- 35       (6) Release is made pursuant to subpoena or court order. Upon request of the  
36       person identified in the record, the record shall be reviewed in camera. In the  
37       trial, the trial judge may, during the taking of testimony concerning such  
38       information, exclude from the courtroom all persons except the officers of  
39       the court, the parties and those engaged in the trial of the case;
- 40       (7) Release is made by the Department or a local health department to a court or  
41       a law enforcement official for the purpose of enforcing this Article or Article  
42       22 of this Chapter, or investigating a terrorist incident using nuclear,  
43       biological, or chemical agents. A law enforcement official who receives the  
44       information shall not disclose it further, except (i) when necessary to enforce  
45       this Article or Article 22 of this Chapter, or when necessary to conduct an  
46       investigation of a terrorist incident using nuclear, biological, or chemical  
47       agents, or (ii) when the Department or a local health department seeks the  
48       assistance of the law enforcement official in preventing or controlling the  
49       spread of the disease or condition and expressly authorizes the disclosure as  
50       necessary for that purpose;

- 1 (8) Release is made by the Department or a local health department to another  
2 federal, state or local public health agency for the purpose of preventing or  
3 controlling the spread of a communicable disease or communicable  
4 condition;
- 5 (9) Release is made by the Department for bona fide research purposes. The  
6 Commission shall adopt rules providing for the use of the information for  
7 research purposes;
- 8 (10) Release is made pursuant to G.S. 130A-144(b); or
- 9 (11) Release is made pursuant to any other provisions of law that specifically  
10 authorize or require the release of information or records related to AIDS."

11 **SECTION 5.** G.S. 131D-21 reads as rewritten:

12 **"§ 131D-21. Declaration of residents' rights.**

13 Each facility shall treat its residents in accordance with the provisions of this Article. Every  
14 resident shall have the following rights:

- 15 (1) To be treated with respect, consideration, dignity, and full recognition of his  
16 or her individuality and right to privacy.
- 17 (2) To receive care and services which are adequate, appropriate, and in  
18 compliance with relevant federal and State laws and rules and regulations.
- 19 (3) To receive upon admission and during his or her stay a written statement of  
20 the services provided by the facility and the charges for these services.
- 21 (4) To be free of mental and physical abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- 22 (5) Except in emergencies, to be free from chemical and physical restraint  
23 unless authorized for a specified period of time by a physician according to  
24 clear and indicated medical need.
- 25 (6) To have his or her personal and medical records kept confidential and not  
26 disclosed ~~without the written consent of the individual or guardian, which~~  
27 ~~consent shall specify to whom the disclosure may be made, except as~~  
28 permitted or required by applicable State or federal statute or regulation or  
29 by third party contract. It is not the intent of this section to prohibit access to  
30 medical records by the treating physician except when the individual objects  
31 in writing. Records may also be disclosed without the written consent of the  
32 individual to agencies, institutions or individuals which are providing  
33 emergency medical services to the individual. Disclosure of information  
34 shall be limited to that which is necessary to meet the emergency law.
- 35 (7) To receive a reasonable response to his or her requests from the facility  
36 administrator and staff.
- 37 (8) To associate and communicate privately and without restriction with people  
38 and groups of his or her own choice on his or her own or their initiative at  
39 any reasonable hour.
- 40 (9) To have access at any reasonable hour to a telephone where he or she may  
41 speak privately.
- 42 (10) To send and receive mail promptly and unopened, unless the resident  
43 requests that someone open and read mail, and to have access at his or her  
44 expense to writing instruments, stationery, and postage.
- 45 (11) To be encouraged to exercise his or her rights as a resident and citizen, and  
46 to be permitted to make complaints and suggestions without fear of coercion  
47 or retaliation.
- 48 (12) To have and use his or her own possessions where reasonable and have an  
49 accessible, lockable space provided for security of personal valuables. This  
50 space shall be accessible only to the resident, the administrator, or  
51 supervisor-in-charge.

- 1 (13) To manage his or her personal needs funds unless such authority has been  
2 delegated to another. If authority to manage personal needs funds has been  
3 delegated to the facility, the resident has the right to examine the account at  
4 any time.
- 5 (14) To be notified when the facility is issued a provisional license or notice of  
6 revocation of license by the North Carolina Department of Health and  
7 Human Services and the basis on which the provisional license or notice of  
8 revocation of license was issued. The resident's responsible family member  
9 or guardian shall also be notified.
- 10 (15) To have freedom to participate by choice in accessible community activities  
11 and in social, political, medical, and religious resources and to have freedom  
12 to refuse such participation.
- 13 (16) To receive upon admission to the facility a copy of this section.
- 14 (17) To not be transferred or discharged from a facility except for medical  
15 reasons, the residents' own or other residents' welfare, nonpayment for the  
16 stay, or when the transfer is mandated under State or federal law. The  
17 resident shall be given at least 30 days' advance notice to ensure orderly  
18 transfer or discharge, except in the case of jeopardy to the health or safety of  
19 the resident or others in the home. The resident has the right to appeal a  
20 facility's attempt to transfer or discharge the resident pursuant to rules  
21 adopted by the Medical Care Commission, and the resident shall be allowed  
22 to remain in the facility until resolution of the appeal unless otherwise  
23 provided by law. The Medical Care Commission shall adopt rules pertaining  
24 to the transfer and discharge of residents that offer at least the same  
25 protections to residents as State and federal rules and regulations governing  
26 the transfer or discharge of residents from nursing homes."

27 **SECTION 6.** G.S. 131E-144.3 reads as rewritten:

28 **"§ 131E-144.3. Declaration of home care clients' rights.**

29 Each client of a home care agency shall have the following rights:

- 30 (1) To be informed and participate in his or her plan of care.
- 31 (2) To be treated with respect, consideration, dignity, and full recognition of his  
32 or her individuality and right to privacy.
- 33 (3) To receive care and services that are adequate, appropriate, and in  
34 compliance with relevant federal and State laws and rules and regulations.
- 35 (4) To voice grievances about care and not be subjected to discrimination or  
36 reprisal for doing so.
- 37 (5) To have his or her personal and medical records kept confidential and not be  
38 disclosed ~~without appropriate written consent~~ except as permitted or  
39 required by applicable State or federal law.
- 40 (6) To be free of mental and physical abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- 41 (7) To receive a written statement of services provided by the agency and the  
42 charges the client is liable for paying.
- 43 (8) To be informed of the process for acceptance and continuance of service and  
44 eligibility determination.
- 45 (9) To accept or refuse services.
- 46 (10) To be informed of the agency's on-call service.
- 47 (11) To be informed of supervisory accessibility and availability.
- 48 (12) To be advised of the agency's procedures for discharge.
- 49 (13) To receive a reasonable response to his or her requests of the agency.
- 50 (14) To be notified within 10 days when the agency's license has been revoked,  
51 suspended, canceled, annulled, withdrawn, recalled, or amended.

1 (15) To be advised of the agency's policies regarding patient responsibilities."  
2 **SECTION 7.** This act becomes effective January 1, 2012.