**Fund Raising and Public Relations**

The federal government recently passed a national rule regarding the privacy of health information that impacts the Medical College of Wisconsin’s ability to use this information to carry out its mission and conduct its day-to-day activities. This national rule is called the Privacy Regulation and is part of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

The Privacy Regulation allows MCW to only use demographic information (name, address, age and gender) of an individual and dates of service for purposes of fundraising activities, unless an authorization is received in advance from the patient. Without an authorization from the patient, MCW cannot use a patient’s diagnosis, clinic name where services were received, or specialty of the treating physician, to identify or assemble mailing lists for fundraising or promotional purposes.

In addition, MCW must receive a signed authorization from the patient for all public relations media testimonials.

Through MCW’s Notice of Privacy Practices, patients are informed that they may be contacted for fundraising purposes and how they may choose not to receive MCW fundraising communications. If any fundraising materials are sent to patients the materials must include a description of how an individual can request to be removed from future fundraising communications. Once an individual has made this request, MCW must take reasonable steps to ensure that those wishes are honored.

If you wish to learn more about HIPAA and to access the Fund Raising and Public Relations Authorization Form, please visit the MCW HIPAA website at [http://infoscope.mcw.edu/display/router.asp?DocID=7961](http://infoscope.mcw.edu/display/router.asp?DocID=7961).