

Privacy of Student Health Records

Student health records are maintained by Yale Health primarily to provide health care to university students. Student health records are maintained in an electronic medical record system known as Epic, which is also used by health care providers at the Yale School of Medicine, the Yale New Haven Health System, and elsewhere. By keeping records in Epic, treating clinicians at Yale Health have access to a more detailed record of student health needs, facilitating better care.

Student health records include the records of care provided by Yale Health clinicians; records provided to Yale Health clinicians by students or at the request of students; and records available through Epic or a health information exchange. Your Yale Health clinician reviews care provided elsewhere solely for the purpose of providing your care at Yale Health. For example, a clinician at Yale Health may review a student's Yale New Haven Hospital emergency room visit in order to provide follow-up care to the student at Yale Health. When an external record is used to provide care at Yale Health, it becomes part of the student health record. Note that certain sensitive records, including details of care provided at Yale Health Mental Health & Counseling, are subject to further privacy protections and are not broadly accessible within Epic.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a federal law, governs how university officials may use education records, including student health records. (Health records in Epic that are not used by your Yale Health provider are protected by a different federal law, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, commonly known as HIPAA.) Under FERPA student health records may be accessed with student consent or as allowed by the statute. For example, university officials may have access to a student's vaccination status to protect campus health and safety, or Heads of Colleges may be informed when students are admitted to inpatient care at Yale Health so they can help students obtain academic accommodations. In these cases, university officials would receive only the minimum information necessary for that purpose and only university officials involved in vaccine compliance or academic accommodation would receive the health information. For more information on FERPA see <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

The Yale Police Department may not access student health records without student consent or proper legal process, such as a subpoena. Nor can identified student health records be used for medical research purposes without student consent. University officials may not access student health records without student consent, unless the requested access complies with FERPA, meets university privacy standards, and has been reviewed and approved by the Chief Medical Officer, in consultation with the Office of the General Counsel, the Yale Privacy Office, Chief of Mental Health and Counseling, and the Chief of Student Health, as appropriate.