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**STATEMENT***

**Trump Admin’s Interoperability Rules Fail to Give Patients Full Control**

Rules Lack True Patient Consent and Safeguards Over Medical Data

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom (CCHF) expresses concern about the lack of privacy protections in the Trump administration’s newly released health information interoperability rules on patient medical records by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Health and Human Services Department’s Office of the Nation Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC).

“While we appreciate the Trump administration’s effort to help patients get timely access to their medical records, the rules only give patients the power to choose which data in their electronic health records a smartphone app can receive. But that is as far as their authority over their personal medical information goes,” said Twila Brase, president and co-founder of CCHF.

“The new interoperability rules require patients to be informed about how their data is shared, but that is not consent,” Brase stated.

“The administration claims the rules give patients control over their medical records, but it doesn’t stop their hospitals or doctors from sharing those records with untold numbers of business associates, which the permissive HIPAA data-sharing rule allows them to do,” Brase added. “For example, it won’t stop Ascension or any other hospital system from sharing 50 million patient records with Google.”

“These rules are a combined 1,718 pages of missed opportunities to truly restore the patient consent requirement over the sharing of their medical records that HIPAA eliminated,” Brase concluded.

CCHF maintains a patient-centered, privacy-focused, free-market perspective. CCHF has worked in its home state of Minnesota and at the national level for more than 20 years to protect health care choices, individualized patient care, and medical and genetic privacy rights. In 2016, CCHF launched The Wedge of Health Freedom, an online directory of direct-pay practices (JointheWedge.com)

Twila Brase, RN, PHN has been named by Modern Healthcare as one of the “100 Most Powerful People in Health Care.” She is the host of the daily Health Freedom Minute radio program heard by over 5 million weekly listeners on more than 800 radio stations nationwide, and the author of the four-time award-winning book, “Big Brother in the Exam Room: The Dangerous Truth About Electronic Health Records.”