Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom: Wednesday Night’s House Vote to Support a National Patient ID would be the End of Privacy

The Fate of Patient Privacy is Now in The Hands of the U.S. Senate

ST. PAUL, Minn.— In an amendment Wednesday night to H.R. 2740, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to eliminate the longstanding prohibition against funding a national patient ID, essentially a national tracking number to link all medical records together, requiring the ID for access to care (“no card, no care”). A stalwart advocate for patient privacy, Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom (CCHF, www.cchfreedom.org) is deeply concerned about this reality.

In 2012, CCHF issued a white paper on the National Patient ID.

The mandate to impose a unique patient ID (UPI) was part of the Clinton Health Security Plan back in 1993. And when that failed, it was added as part of HIPAA in 1996. But in 1998, Congressman Ron Paul stopped it by putting an annual prohibition on funding in the 1999 appropriations bill, and every appropriations bill thereafter, making any development or discussions about it illegal. The UPI is current law in HIPAA but has never been implemented due to the funding prohibition from Congressman Ron Paul.

However, in 2017, in the appropriations bill, Congress allowed progress toward a “national patient matching system” and advocates for a National Patient ID cheered.

Now, it will be up to the U.S. Senate and the Trump administration to stop a national patient tracking and medical care access number from becoming a reality.

“Make no mistake. The UPI would be the end of privacy and the foundation of a national health data system and a socialized health care system,” said CCHF president and co-founder Twila Brase. “This would end all hope for protecting privacy in the exam room, enable surveillance and deep predictive analytics, and allow the creation of a lifelong, fully linked, cradle-to-grave medical record available to the millions who, due to the permissive HIPAA data-sharing rule, could have access without patient consent. This is because of the fact, of which most people are unaware, HIPAA does not protect privacy. It opened up medical records to potentially millions of outsiders.”

Twila Brase writes about Unique Patient ID’s in her new book, “Big Brother in the Exam Room: The Dangerous Truth About Electronic Health Records”. You can find the book online wherever books are sold or at BigBrotherintheExamRoom.com.

For more information about CCHF, visit www.cchfreedom.org, its Facebook page or its Twitter feed @CCHFreedom. Also view the media page for CCHF here. For more CCHF reports on health privacy and surveillance, visit the CCHF privacy page. For more about CCHF’s initiative to protect newborn DNA, visit www.itsmydna.org.