March 11, 2020

Pull the Plug on HIPAA; Don’t Extend It

HIPAA is NOT a privacy law. This permissive data-sharing rule has destroyed patient privacy rights. At least 2.2 million entities, plus government, can access patient data if doctors, hospitals and others choose to share. This includes 1.5 million business associates, such as Google.

But now Congress wants to put third-party health apps under HIPAA. They say it will protect patient privacy. But the real purpose cannot possibly be to protect privacy because HIPAA protects no one’s privacy.

The only thing regulators and Congress should do is to restore the patient consent and ownership rights that Americans used to have before HIPAA. The Trump administration could do it unilaterally without Congress by simply changing the HIPAA rule. It’s time to pull the plug on HIPAA, not extend it to health apps.
