



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS AIR COMBAT COMMAND
LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, VIRGINIA

13 May 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR ACC MEDICAL GROUP COMMANDERS

FROM: HQ ACC/SG
162 Dodd Blvd, Ste 100
Langley AFB VA 23665-1995

SUBJECT: Release of Prescriptions to Patient Representatives

1. Since 1998 the Air Force Medical Service has historically required a person picking up a prescription for another individual to present a signed statement from the patient permitting such, as well as either the patient's ID card or a copy thereof. HQ USAF/SGO released a memorandum stating the implementation of the April 2003 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) supersedes previous policy letters. As such, an individual, acting as the patient's representative, can pick up a prescription for the patient under the following circumstances:

a. The patient has identified, either verbally or in writing, a family member, other relative, personal friend, or any other person authorized to pick up the prescription, or

b. If the patient is not present to give consent, the health care provider may use professional judgment to determine if it is in the patient's best interest to provide the prescription to his/her representative.

2. HIPAA regulations permit the conveyance of limited protected health information to the patient's representative. Pharmacy personnel may explain to the representative how the medication should be taken, but should not disclose that a medication is for the treatment of a specific condition.

3. In our ACC medical facilities, it is my expectation that for both scheduled and non-scheduled drugs, our pharmacies will require the photo ID of the individual picking up the medication and pharmacy personnel will ensure a mechanism is in place to document the name of the individual who picks up the medication. Further, if the individual picking up the prescription knows of an item to be retrieved for a specific patient, it is presumed the individual is an acceptable source of verbal permission. POC is Lieutenant Colonel Bruce Dell, DSN: 348-3211, bruce.dell@nellis.af.mil.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Russell J. Kilpatrick".

RUSSELL J. KILPATRICK
Brigadier General, USAF, MC, CFS
Command Surgeon

1 Attachment:
AF/SGO Memo, 24 Mar 04