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ISSUE ALERTS

HHS ISSUES REQUEST FOR INFORMATION SEEKING INPUT ON HIPAA IMPROVEMENTS

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On December 14, 2018, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS") Office for Civil Rights ("OCR") issued a request for information ("RFI") seeking input from the healthcare industry on how to improve the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act ("HIPAA") regulations to meet HHS' goal of promoting coordinated, value-based care.

The RFI seeks input on a broad range of potential reforms to the HIPAA regulations. Through a series of 54 questions, the RFI seeks comment on specific areas of the Privacy Rule, including:

- Encouraging information-sharing for treatment and care coordination;
- Facilitating parental involvement in care;
- Addressing the opioid crisis and mental illness;
- Accounting for disclosures of protected health information; and
- Changing the requirement for certain providers to make a good faith effort to obtain an acknowledgment of receipt of the Notice of Privacy Practices.

OCR Director Roger Severino stated: "We are looking for candid feedback about how the existing HIPAA regulations are working in the real world and how we can improve them." This is an important opportunity for the healthcare industry to provide input on potential reforms to the HIPAA regulations. If implemented, these reforms could improve care coordination and better reflect technological innovation.

Public Comments on the RFI are due by February 12, 2019. The RFI can be downloaded at: https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/12/14/2018-27162/request-for-information-on-modifying-hipaa-rules-to-improve-coordinated-care

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Foulston Siefkin's healthcare lawyers maintain a high level of expertise regarding federal and state regulations affecting the healthcare industry. The firm devotes significant resources to ensure our attorneys remain up-to-date on developments. At the same time, our healthcare practice group's relationship with Foulston Siefkin's other practice groups, including the taxation, general business, labor and employment, and commercial litigation groups, enhances our ability to consider all of the legal ramifications of any situation or strategy. For additional information on this topic or other healthcare-related issues, contact **Brooke Bennett Aziere** at 316.291.9768 or **baziere@foulston.com**. For more information on the firm, please visit our website at www.foulston.com.

Established in 1919, Foulston Siefkin is the largest law firm in Kansas. With offices in Wichita, Kansas City, and Topeka, Foulston Siefkin provides a full range of legal services to clients in the areas of administrative & regulatory; antitrust & trade regulation; appellate law; banking & financial services; business & corporate; construction; creditors' rights & bankruptcy; e-commerce; education & public entity; elder law; emerging small business; employee benefits & ERISA; employment & labor; energy; environmental; estate planning & probate; family business enterprise; franchise & distribution; government investigations & white collar defense; governmental liability; government relations & public policy; healthcare; immigration; insurance regulatory; intellectual property; litigation & disputes; mediation/dispute resolution; mergers & acquisitions; Native American law; oil, gas & minerals; OSHA; privacy & data security; private equity & venture capital; product liability; professional malpractice; real estate; securities & corporate finance; senior housing & care; supply chain management; tax exempt organizations; taxation; trade secret & noncompete litigation; water rights; and wind energy.

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PRACTICE AREAS

- Healthcare