



Sept. 10, 2020

Sent on behalf of Bill Isenberg, M.D., Chief Quality and Safety Officer, Sutter Health

To: Leadership Symposium

ONC announced the [final rule](#) of the 2016 Cures Act earlier this year, requiring clinicians to electronically release most clinical notes and test results as of Nov. 2, 2020.

Patients have long had the right to access their health information through requests to Health Information Management (HIM). What changes Nov. 2 is that clinical notes and test results will be released electronically through My Health Online (MHO), the Sutter patient portal.

This includes all data pertaining to patient medications, allergies, demographics, care team members, eight types of clinical notes, assessment and plan of treatment, vital signs and lab results. This new regulation is pertinent to all care settings – including ambulatory, acute care, home health, and other settings. For more information about the US Core Data for Interoperability and release of information, [click here](#).

Clinicians will have few exceptions that will allow the blocking of notes and test results. A Sutter-wide project team is preparing an OpenNotes and Results Release toolkit to help leaders and front-line clinicians become more familiar with the Cures Act final rule and preparing information to help patients better understand this change.

In 2016, many Sutter clinicians in the Valley operating unit, with small pilots in the Bay, began piloting OpenNotes, sharing their ambulatory progress notes with patients via MHO. It has been largely a positive experience as fuller transparency has built stronger relationships between patients and care teams, encouraging patients to engage more in their health and become more involved in their care. With this new regulation to release notes and results, we are communicating with all Sutter-aligned clinicians now to make sure they have the information and resources they need to comply.

In separate OpenNotes studies:

- 77-87% of patients said accessing their notes made them feel more in control of their healthcare
- Up to 78% of patients reported access to notes helped them take their medications as prescribed

With the OpenNotes movement now a federal mandate, this is a huge step in improving how patients engage in their own health. More information is available at www.opennotes.org.

In addition to Sutter supporting clinicians with training and tools about this transition, we are asking clinicians to provide us feedback so we can better understand how this change affects them and their relationships with patients.

For additional information, please reach out to our Clinical Leadership Team sponsors Danielle Reno (renod@sutterhealth.org) or Howard Landa, M.D. (landah@sutterhealth.org).