

PSHMC cannot guarantee the confidentiality of e-mail messages transmitted via the internet

### E-mail reminders:

- If you are experiencing a Medical Emergency, call 911 immediately.
- If your caregiver does not respond within a time frame that meets your needs, please call your caregiver's office.
- Should you elect to communicate electronically, please include your full name and medical record number.
- Your caregiver will document e-mail communications in your permanent medical record. This may be accomplished by summarizing the message in a written note.

Name	
Telephone	(717)
E-mail	@

Name	
Telephone	(717)
E-mail	@

Medical Record Number \_\_\_\_\_

# A Patient's Guide to Electronic Mail

PENNSTATE



Milton S. Hershey Medical Center  
College of Medicine



## Can I communicate with my caregiver(s) electronically?

Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center (PSHMC) offers its patients the ability to communicate with caregivers via electronic mail.

If you have an Internet e-mail address and would like to take advantage of this service, please discuss your wishes with your caregiver(s) first. Some caregivers prefer not to communicate with their patients over the Internet. If a caregiver agrees to exchange e-mail with you, please observe the following:

### Confidentiality, can it be guaranteed?

By its nature, the Internet is non-secure. Do not use e-mail to send or request sensitive information. PSHMC cannot guarantee the confidentiality of any messages transmitted over the Internet.

Internet transmissions can be intercepted and stored by unknown parties. PSHMC has no control over these actions.

### E-mail rules:

In a Medical Emergency, call 911 immediately (or your local emergency service number).

E-mail may be used for conversing about routine matters or for requesting information. Please contact your caregiver's office by telephone to report a sudden or significant change in your health, or to make arrangements to discuss sensitive information.

## PSHMC Documentation:

Your caregiver will retain or document e-mail communications in your medical record. This may be accomplished by placing a copy of the e-mail message in your record, or by summarizing the message in a written note. For purposes of Treatment, Payment or other Routine Operations, your e-mail message may be forwarded to, or accessed by, other individuals within PSHMC.

### Sending E-mail:

E-mail users frequently use an alias or nickname. Unless you identify yourself, your caregiver will be unable to determine who you are. If you elect to use e-mail to contact your caregiver, the subject line of your e-mail should be the letters PSHMC-EM. In the body of the note, you should include your full name and Medical Record number or full name and date of birth. If you do not provide this information, your caregiver may not be able to reply. It would be helpful to provide your phone number as well.

Be sure to enter and validate the caregiver's complete e-mail address prior to sending your message. Misdirected e-mail will delay or preclude a response from your caregiver and can affect your privacy.

On the back of this pamphlet are spaces for entering the names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of your caregiver(s). If a message is undeliverable, please call the caregiver's office.

