

Health Center maintains records' confidentiality

A meeting of administrators will be held Tuesday to discuss a disagreement between Campus Security and the University Health Center (UHC) about the kind of patient information that UHC physicians can release to campus police.

The dispute arose several months ago when Campus Security officers asked for "certain information from UHC doctors for security files." Physicians at UHC said they would not comply with the request because law requires confidentiality between doctor and patient, except in cases of violence, such as shootings or stabbings.

One officer said Campus Security wants the names, addresses, social security numbers and conditions of patients they deliver to UHC or accident victims. He said Lincoln hospitals give that information readily to city police for record keeping purposes.

Larry Rennecker, assistant administrator of Lincoln General Hospital concurred with the officer's statement, with the exception that a patient's next of kin must be notified before any information is released. In addition, no information is released by city hospitals on intoxication, suicide, drugs, poisoning or sexual assaults, he said. "Condition" means "good, fair, poor and critical" in city hospital terms.

Dr. Sam Fuenning, UHC director, said he has not released any information to campus security about UHC patients and will not pending an administrative directive to do otherwise.

He said an opinion had been written in December

on the legal aspects of the dispute, but that the document's interpretation led to further differences between the groups.

Gail Gade, chief of Campus Security, said that since the legal opinion was rendered "there has been no further difficulty, but the problem is that he (Fuenning) still feels we're unco-operative. He's interpreting the opinion differently."

Gade said Campus Security had made reports on students taken to UHC "for years," and that the reports were routine. "In fact, they (the reports) are usually thrown away after a few months," Gade said.

"The basic concerns of the relationship between Campus Security and UHC are based on honest differences of opinion," according to Ken Bader, vice chancellor of student affairs. "There is no acrimony between the two sides."

He said the meeting next week between University lawyers, Campus Security and UHC should solve the problem. Bader said written guidelines on the problem will be drawn up based on findings at the meeting.

The meeting will not be open to the press or public, Bader said, because it "involves individuals from one agency responding to questions with other agencies within the University," and because the "confidentiality of information about students at the UHC must be considered."



Gade... Campus Security and UHC difficulties based on differences of opinion.

daily nebraskan

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The Daily Nebraskan is written, edited and managed by students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. It is editorially independent of the University faculty, administration and student body.


The Daily Nebraskan is published by the Publications Committee on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday throughout the fall and spring semesters except holidays and vacations.

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Second class postage paid at Lincoln, Nebraska. Address: The Daily Nebraskan/34 Nebraska Union/14th & R Streets/Lincoln, Nebr. 68508. Telephone: 402/472/2588.

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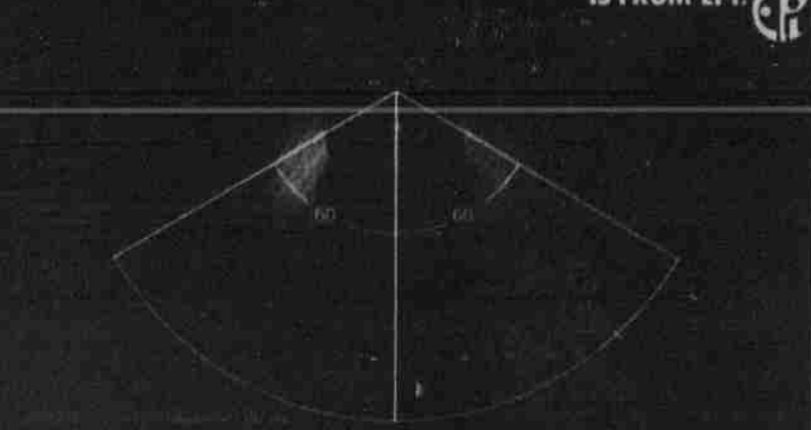
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