Protecting electronic health information is crucial to organizations exchanging data across the healthcare enterprise.

Overview
Collaborating with stakeholders, NIST provides standards, guidelines, tools, and technologies to protect information systems, including health IT systems, against threats to the confidentiality of information, integrity of information and processes, and availability of information and services.

Industry Need Addressed
With the increased use of electronic health record systems, organizations need guidance to effectively and efficiently manage their security programs, including handling the challenges associated with electronic data exchange and ensuring the data is adequately protected.

NIST Approach
Specific for health IT, researchers are:

• Leveraging security automation principles and specifications to develop baseline security configuration checklists and tool kits to aid organizations in implementing the HIPAA Security Rule standards and implementation specifications.

• Developing a harmonized set of security principles for use in establishing architectures supporting the exchange of health information.

• Conducting outreach and awareness on security challenges, threats and safeguards, including presentations at industry conferences, workshops, federal advisory committees and at other federal agencies on the application of security standards and guidelines to support health IT implementations.

Impact
These research efforts result in standards, guidelines, tools, and technologies that are being used to provide for the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of health information and information systems.

For additional information, please visit http://www.nist.gov/healthcare/security/index.cfm

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