

Q. Here is a question that someone may have asked previously, but this just came up in our HIPAA meeting yesterday. How are we going to get our Notice of Privacy to people who do not actually come to our facility? For example, must we mail a notice to nursing home patients or home health patients that have blood delivered to the lab? We plan to send out a mass mailing but that will probably not cover everyone the first time.

A. Your Notice of Privacy Practices must be provided at the first direct treatment service delivery date. At NHS/UNMC , we are considering Laboratory services to be indirect treatment services, so no NPP is required pursuant to 45 CFR 164.520(c)(2). (Sheila Wrobel, Privacy Officer, Nebraska Health System)

A. Remember that not all lab service is in the "reference" category. When we have a patient who actually comes to a hospital lab for tests relating to subsequent care, they will receive the Notice when they register. Some labs in other regions do direct tests for individuals which would also require the Notice at the first on-site contact. (Kathy Zeitz, Methodist Health System)