

CareEverywhere FAQs

Information about how CareEverywhere can impact communication around your medical care. This may be especially relevant if you or your child live in a state that restricts gender-affirming care.

What is CareEverywhere, and can I turn it off?

CareEverywhere is an application Epic uses to share patient data between health care institutions. Its goal is to provide a comprehensive picture of a patient's chart. If your Fenway Health providers can see the care you or your child receives at an outside hospital or clinic, that helps us understand how to deliver the best care for you.

Massachusetts is an OPT-OUT state for CareEverywhere. This means once your chart is set up at Fenway, the system searches for your information at surrounding facilities and pulls it into the chart. This allows anyone on your care team (at Fenway or otherwise) to get a better picture of your overall healthcare journey.

If you are a Fenway Health patient and do NOT want your Fenway record to be shared with your other health care providers, let anyone on your care team know. We can turn off this setting for you at any time.

It is possible to turn off some sharing options without turning off all CareEverywhere sharing. You can turn off sharing but still have results from outside providers imported into your record, or you can restrict sharing with specific healthcare providers or organizations. **Please reach out to transhealth@fenwayhealth.org or medicalrecords@fenwayhealth.org if you would like to learn more about how to do that.**

If you decide to turn off CareEverywhere at Fenway, you should come up with a different way to share those records with appropriate medical providers. You can still access the Fenway MyChart and download notes and test results to share with other providers as needed for communication around your care. You can also request your medical records directly from Fenway's Medical Records Department.

You can change your mind about the CareEverywhere status of your Fenway medical records at any time – you are not locked into any decision.

Pros and cons of CareEverywhere for trans patients and their families

Care Everywhere can be turned on and off. In some circumstances – like with a primary care provider, emergency rooms, or a medical specialist – it's good that they can see each other's charts. It reduces medical errors, shares lab results faster, and increases patient safety. Having CareEverywhere turned off can be a problem if an outside provider is prescribing an important medication that interacts with another medication that Fenway might prescribe. In these cases, it's good to have CareEverywhere in place and functioning.

If you live outside Massachusetts and your state places significant limitations on transgender health care, that may increase legal risk for you, your child, or home state clinical providers. CareEverywhere would allow any of your providers in your home state who use Epic to see the medical records from Fenway.

Gender-affirming codes and diagnoses

When updating medical records and sending information out for billing purposes, we use the codes that most accurately describe the issue we're managing. We have to do that – otherwise, it is insurance fraud.

Insurance will pay for certain codes today – for example, gender dysphoria – that it wouldn't in the past. That has been part of the evolution of the use of codes in trans health care.

Codes, diagnoses, and billing history from previous visits that are already in a medical chart can't be removed. Changing the code now to something less "obvious" won't change the history of a previous code used. [Your medical records are protected under HIPAA](#).

I'm worried about who has access to information in my medical records – how is this data kept secure?

Medical records are protected under HIPAA to limit government overreach. Local and federal governments are able to serve court orders for medical records in the case of criminal investigations or if a patient is believed to be a foreign agent. All government requests for medical records are reviewed by Fenway's legal team and, if any requests appear to be suspicious, they will be reviewed with outside counsel and possibly the Mass Attorney General's Office. Additionally, the Massachusetts government is highly protective of gender affirming care, and they will continue to be. [Learn more about HIPPA here](#).

HIPPA protects Fenway medical record information from being shared without your permission. By agreeing to use CareEverywhere you have modified those protections, allowing other providers who have legitimate roles to play in your or your child's care to access those medical records, but they cannot share that information outside that circle of care without your permission. We don't know what potential legal risk may be imposed on providers who can access the Fenway medical records through CareEverywhere, and we cannot control how those providers will use that information either in accordance with HIPPA or illegally.

Turning off Care Everywhere *only at Fenway*:

- **WOULD** mean that your outside PCPs and any other medical specialists, including in states other than Massachusetts, would not be able to see Fenway's medical records for you or your child.
- **WOULD NOT** stop Care Everywhere record-sharing between any other separate Epic chart you have elsewhere, including any out-of-state providers working with you or your child.

Care Everywhere serves as a helpful tool for efficient communication, improved safety, and comprehensive record keeping of all of your medical care. However, improved communication and data sharing does come with the risk that more clinical sites and providers may have access to your personal health information. This information should only be used for medical purposes and HIPPA continues to protect your privacy, but we also understand the desire for increased personal security at this time. Please consider all of the pros and cons of deciding to opt-out of Care Everywhere before you make this decision. Reach out to your Fenway provider or the Trans Health Program if you have any additional questions.