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### Protecting Privacy When Posting Notes of Appreciation

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By Nina Youngstrom

Patients sometimes write letters to hospital employees to express their appreciation for the care they received, and employees may also write notes to their co-workers thanking them for their hard work and support. Stormont Vail Health in Topeka, Kansas, encourages and posts these expressions of support in its Small Moments program, says Chief Compliance Officer Christine Hogan-Newgren. Small Moments is designed to reinforce the “10 Tenets,” the health system’s blueprint for “creating a culture of caring and patient quality, satisfaction and safety,” she says. The tenets include: “We are sensitive to the conversations we have in places where we can be overheard by others (elevators, waiting areas, etc.); we all own patient safety no matter our role in patient care; and we are devoted to creating an environment that treats all people with compassion, dignity and respect.” When employees receive notes from patients or co-workers, they are posted on Small Moments boards that are located throughout the health system – in hospitals, clinics and business offices. But they have to take a few precautions first. “You want to make sure they’re properly redacted,” she explained. To ensure patient privacy isn’t compromised, Hogan-Newgren created this tip sheet. Contact Hogan-Newgren at [choganew@stormontvail.org](mailto:choganew@stormontvail.org).

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