



## **Maintaining Adolescent Access and Confidentiality with a Custom Patient Portal**

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**Problem Statement:** In 2013, the MyChildren's Patient Portal was launched at Boston Children's Hospital. MyChildren's is a homegrown application with over 41,000 users, providing patients and families with web access to portions of their health record. Users can access clinic notes, lab results, diagnostic studies, billing information, and send messages to providers. To meet the needs of pediatric patients (as well as government regulations), MyChildren's has been designed so that patients 13 years old and over can access their records with additional confidentiality. This functionality was added in June of 2014. **Methods:** To meet the needs of adolescent users, the MyChildren's team uses the same validation processes that already existed for all end users. Patients are able to begin the account validation process at their ambulatory visit by asking for a "token" that confirms their access request. User provisioning is strongly monitored and if created incorrectly, portal access is not granted. At the request of our legal team, MyChildren's sends notification to the parent of patients aged 13 or 14 informing them that their child has access to their own health information. Adolescent access allows patients to view confidential visits that are filtered. To increase patient sign up, the MyChildren's Support Team has worked with the Adolescent Clinic to train staff on how to promote the portal to patients. **Results:** As of February 2016, there are 393 adolescents accessing their own portal accounts. Interest amongst adolescents has steadily risen since the June 2014 launch. Access to the portal brings health records directly to the patient, and they are no longer obligated to go through our Health Information Management Department. While providing information to adolescents directly through the internet, they are engaged in their own care in a new way. As patients age, and continue their care at BCH (and beyond) once they are over 18, having access to their records allows for familiarity in their transition to adult care. **Significance:** The relationships established amongst the Support Team and clinic staff helps in continuing conversations around the portal that will help with future upgrades to MyChildren's, thus creating a better user experience for patients and parents. This engagement also lends help to other hospital initiatives regarding access. As the user base expands and the patient population has different needs to be met, MyChildren's will need to adapt with that change. When future enhancements begin rolling out to the portal, we will be able to engage with patients regarding what they need out of their experience with the portal, which may be different than the need of their legal guardians. To continue to increase the portal user base and meet the needs of users, the Support Team will need to engage patients through our Adolescent Clinic, Family Advisory Council, and the Hale Center for Families.