

**Andree Salvo**

**Southern New Hampshire University**

**CYB 420**

**Instructor: William Mitchell**

**3-2 Activity: HIPAA Compliance and Security Posture**

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**I. Meeting HIPAA Compliance**

**A. Encryption**

Following HIPAA's regulation standard plays a vital role in lowering the chances of a data breach by requiring organizations to encrypt electronic protected health information (ePHI). Encryption acts as a safeguard, ensuring that intercepted or stolen data remains inaccessible and unreadable to unauthorized individuals. By adhering to HIPAA guidelines, healthcare entities implement advanced encryption protocols to protect sensitive information both at rest and in transit. This strategy not only mitigates the potential consequences of a breach but also demonstrates the organization's commitment to securing patient data safely.

**B. Access Control**

When it comes to access controls, HIPAA's compliance helps lower the risk of data breaches by enforcing strict access rules. This means only people with authorized permission can view or handle electronic health information (ePHI). Organizations can follow these rules by using role-based access (RBAC), unique user IDs, and multifactor authentication. Allowing access only to those who need it helps stop the misuse and reduces the chance of accidental or intentional exposure of sensitive patient health data.

**C. Security Policies**

Setting up and following clear security policies helps protect data under HIPAA's regulations. Following these guidelines shows employees how to manage electronic health information, handle issues, and use technology safely. When a company shares clear guidelines, employees understand their duties and responsibilities for their job role. Understanding helps prevent mistakes, which often lead to data breaches in the healthcare industry.

## **II. Improving Security Posture**

### **A. Attack Surface**

Organizations can strengthen their security measures by following HIPAA's guidelines. They can regularly keep an eye on their networks, regularly check for security gaps, and keep key systems separate. Enforcing MFA limits the opportunities for attackers. By combining HIPAA guidelines with active security steps, organizations can build extra layers of defense, making it more challenging for threats to pass through.

### **B. Scalability**

Following HIPAA rules helps an organization grow its people, processes, and technology. For example, when an organization expands or uses new technology, HIPAA's guidelines help set up strong training programs and access controls for its employees. Using this approach makes sure security measures grow with the organization while keeping up with compliance rules and standards.

### **C. Multi-Layered Approach**

As for the Multi-Layered Approach, HIPAA uses different types of security measures: technical, administrative, and physical. This means that if one measure fails, like a password being compromised, other protections like encryption, firewalls, and monitoring systems will

help stop someone from gaining unauthorized access. This layered security helps organizations find, control, and respond to threats better, lowering their overall risk.

### **III. Third-Party Agreements**

#### **A. External Contractors**

Following HIPAA's rules is very important for an organization to work with external contractors and business partners. Third parties must adhere to HIPAA's rules because they might have access to sensitive electronic protected health information. Organizations must create a formal agreement, like a Business Associate Agreement, for their partners to follow the same security and privacy rules. This will help protect electronic protected health information from its patients safely.

#### **B. Cloud-based**

As for cloud environments, following HIPAA's regulation means setting up proper access controls for cloud providers to stop any form of unauthorized access. This includes using encryption, authentication, and audit logging designed for cloud services. Cloud providers need to follow HIPAA rules, and having strong access control policies in place is key to preventing data breaches.