

The Cairns Convention on Consent to the use of clinical photography other than for the direct care of the patient*

Patients have rights to privacy that should not be infringed without informed consent.**

The informed consent of the patient (or other appropriate representative of the patient) is essential before any use of clinical photographs, video and audio recordings other than for the direct care of the patient or for the audit of that care (e.g. for teaching, research or publication).

Anonymisation of images (e.g. by pixellation or other masking of the eye region) does not guarantee anonymity and does not replace the need for informed consent.

This right to informed consent extends to all images including those that are not immediately identifiable, but which may become so in the context in which they are used.

In the case of publication, the requirements of the International Committee of Journal Editors should be applied.

Patients should be made aware (as a part of the informed consent process) that they may withdraw their consent to further use at any time.

They should also be made aware (as a part of the informed consent process) that if they agree to publication of their images on the World Wide Web, it will be impossible to stop further dissemination of the images.

Unwillingness of patients for their images to be used for purposes outside their direct care should in no way compromise their treatment.

Patients (or other appropriate representative of the patient) have the right to access clinical photographs, video and audio recordings taken of them. Medical Institutions and Practices should ensure that appropriate storage and retrieval systems are in place to accommodate image retrieval.

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**** Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Writing and Editing for Biomedical Publication (International Committee of Journal Editors, <http://www.icmje.org/#privacy>, October 2004)**

Excerpt from: Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Writing and Editing for Biomedical Publication
International Committee of Journal Editors, <http://www.icmje.org/#privacy>,
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Patients have a right to privacy that should not be infringed without informed consent. Identifying information, including patients' names, initials, or hospital numbers, should not be published in written descriptions, photographs, and pedigrees unless the information is essential for scientific purposes and the patient (or parent or guardian) gives written informed consent for publication. Informed consent for this purpose requires that a patient who is identifiable be shown the manuscript to be published.

Identifying details should be omitted if they are not essential. Complete anonymity is difficult to achieve, however, and informed consent should be obtained if there is any doubt. For example, masking the eye region in photographs of patients is inadequate protection of anonymity. If identifying characteristics are altered to protect anonymity, such as in genetic pedigrees, authors should provide assurance that alterations do not distort scientific meaning and editors should so note.

The requirement for informed consent should be included in the journal's instructions for authors. When informed consent has been obtained it should be indicated in the published article.