

Regarding office of special counsel file number DI-1 4-19 59

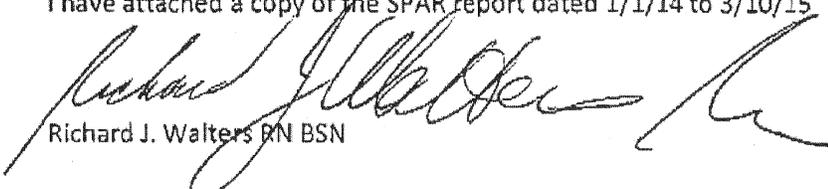
Despite an extensive investigation into the illegal accessing of my records, the Northport VA Medical Center continues to be unable to safeguard my records. My most recent report (sensitive patient access report [SPAR] covering the period from January 1, 2014 to March 10, 2015) shows continued access into my records by unauthorized personnel. Since the Office of the Special Counsel directed the agency's Office of the Medical Inspector (OMI) visit to Northport to conduct this investigation there have been 37 more entries into my record. Our privacy officer advised me that 35 of these were probably related to the investigation however I have serious misgivings regarding the integrity of the privacy process. She stated that she will investigate the other entries.

Considering I have already filed a complaint concerning the illegal access to my records one would assume that any entry into my record would trigger a review of the person who accessed it. This has not occurred.

Recommendations have been made to change the warning box that notifies a staff member that they are about to enter a sensitive record. This is a great recommendation however it still has not been implemented. The warning box has become a minor inconvenience that the majority of the staff essentially ignore. As there is little repercussions to entering the wrong chart no one takes the warning seriously.

Concerning the employees that inappropriately accessed my records I was disappointed that no action was taken on Stephanie Marcin an employee who retired prior to completion of the investigation. This employee worked as an assistant to Ms. Rosie Chatman who was the associate director of patient care services. Although they have retired the agency is still responsible for their criminal activities including existing SES level and senior administrators for failing to protect my privacy. None of the so called "corrective actions" has done anything to curtail, modify or prevent this continued pervasive culture of privacy violations at the VA Northport since mine and other employee's privacy breach investigations were conducted.

I have attached a copy of the SPAR report dated 1/1/14 to 3/10/15

  
Richard J. Walters RN BSN