

WHAT IS A RECORDS CUSTODIAN?

A records custodian is a partner to help healthcare providers in transition. When a doctor closes their practice or a hospital shuts down a department, patient records remain that must be managed for years after the last patient is seen. There is a legal and moral responsibility to provide access to patient records, but there's no revenue to offset the expense of ongoing management. At Cariend, as a records custodian we help healthcare providers understand their responsibility and transition all physical and digital records to a secure management platform. We provide ongoing access to records at no cost to patients.

LEGACY EMR/EHR SYSTEMS

As your healthcare ecosystem evolves, it's likely that you will change Electronic Medical Record (EMR) and business software systems multiple times during the life of the organization. Legacy systems aren't needed going forward but the need for access to the records remain. The old systems come with ongoing licensing and maintenance costs. Cariend can extract and transition the records from the legacy system(s) to our secure management platform, eliminating the complexity of being in multiple systems and the ongoing licensing and maintenance costs.

MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

Healthy hospital systems tend to grow. Many of our clients, who are first movers in the rural health space, have acquired practices of retiring physicians, clinics, and even smaller hospitals. In those instances, the acquiring facility is responsible for the legacy records of the acquired facility, which may be considered a liability. It can be daunting to assess the records and make informed decisions about what needs to be stored, scanned, or shredded. Cariend serves as a bridge for records access, for both patients and the acquiring facility, and can provide ongoing operational efficiency for the new entity that results from a merger.

CLOSING MEDICAL FACILITIES

Closing a hospital or medical practice is never an easy decision. Whether the circumstances are planned due to retirement, or unexpected due to financial constraints and other factors, deciding how to handle the medical records and ensure release of information can be overwhelming and difficult to navigate. Cariend helps healthcare providers closing a practice, clinic or hospital transfer their legal responsibility for patient records, eliminate the ongoing cost of management for an entity that isn't generating any revenue, while ensuring HIPAA compliance and continuity of care for patients.



Our practice had over 1,200 boxes of paper medical records. Cariend's amazing team was a pleasure to work with at every turn. I am so grateful for their esteemed expertise, unmatched care for our patients, and comprehensive services.

**Patricia Holloway,
Administrator**

Douglas Women's Center, PC
Lithia Springs, GA

THINGS TO LOOK FOR IN A RECORDS CUSTODIAN

HIPAA compliance and awareness of the requirements. This includes items such as offering to provide and sign a Business Associate Agreement (BAA), understanding the required turnaround time and the restrictions on what patients can be charged for medical records.

Experience managing the type of transition you are facing. Different types and sizes of healthcare facilities can require very different transition plans. Ensuring continuity of care and the laws around proper notification are often overlooked, and a records custodian with significant expertise and commitment can ensure a smooth transition.

Flexibility to meet your challenges and budget. Whether your records are physical, digital, or a combination, the records custodian should have options to streamline and organize the variables of your records in the most cost-effective way.

Respect and understanding for your patients. Finding a new provider and obtaining copies of records in a compliant manner can be frustrating for patients. If the records custodian is more committed to storing the records instead of serving the patients, your legacy will be tarnished, and you could also be subject to fines.

LEARN MORE ABOUT **CARIEND**:



We make records management easier. To get started with your transition, call Cariend today at **855.516.0611** or visit us online at **CARIEND.COM**.

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