



EXCEPTIONAL CARE. WITHOUT EXCEPTION.

Releasing patient information to the media

Boston Medical Center is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of our patients and their medical information. The Department of Corporate Communications staff provides patient conditions to the media in accordance with the American Hospital Association guidelines contained in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

How to obtain a patient's condition

To inquire about a patient at Boston Medical Center, members of the media should contact the Department of Corporate Communications at (617) 638-8491 during the regular business hours of 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays. For information after hours or on weekends, call (617) 638-5795, enter pager ID # 0304 and your callback number.

- Media must have the patient's full name.
- Staff may only provide a one-word description about a patient's general condition.
- The release of any medical information beyond a one-word condition requires written authorization by the patient or the patient's legal representative.
- We will acknowledge the death of a patient only after next-of-kin have been notified.

Patient condition definitions

- Undetermined – Patient is awaiting physician assessment.
- Good – Vital signs are stable and within normal limits. Patient is conscious and comfortable. Indicators are excellent.
- Fair – Vital signs are stable and within normal limits. Patient is conscious but may be uncomfortable. Indicators are favorable.
- Serious – Vital signs may be unstable and not within normal limits. Patient is acutely ill. Indicators are questionable.
- Critical – Vitals are unstable and not within normal limits. Patient may be unconscious. Indicators are unfavorable.

Please note, "stable" is not a recognized condition, according to HIPAA guidelines.