Introduction

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures for handling e-mail messages containing Protected Health Information (PHI) at UCD.

**Reference**

45 C.F.R. § 164.312 (e)(1) and (e)(2)(ii)

**Applicability**

This policy applies to all members of the UCD workforce who may transmit ePHI via e-mail.

**Policy**

Anyone at UCD who communicates PHI with recipients outside of UCD using e-mail is responsible for the protection and integrity of the data. This includes faculty, staff, students, trainees, volunteers, etc.

**Procedures**

A. **General**

1. PHI may not be transmitted by e-mail unless the sender of the e-mail is using a secure e-mail system.
2. UCD has implemented a secure messaging system (safemail) which is specifically designed for the transmission of e-mail messages containing PHI and other sensitive information.

   a. Full documentation and instructions for the use of the UCD secure e-mail system can be found on the ITS website.

   b. The UCD secure e-mail system must be used when communicating PHI via e-mail outside of the private network belonging to UCD and its major Affiliates.

   c. E-mails sent within UCD or from UCD to a major Affiliate are already protected and do not need to be sent via the secure e-mail system.

3. Members of the UCD workforce who wish to send PHI or other sensitive information via e-mail and are not on the UCD network must use a secure e-mail system that has the following features:

   a. *Transmission Security.* The message cannot be intercepted by someone other than the intended recipient while the message is in transmission. Transmission security can be accomplished by the use of encryption.

   b. *Mechanism to Authenticate.* The recipient of the message must have the ability to know that the content of the message has not been altered during transmission. This must be built into the e-mail system in use.

4. Updated anti-virus protection must be in place on any UCD computing device either sending or receiving e-mail.

   Updated anti-virus protection must also be in place on the e-mail servers and at the e-mail gateways.