



Dear Colleagues,

Did you know you can put a [BU Microsoft Form](#) or a [Qualtrics](#) or [REDCap](#) survey on a BU website instead of emailing patients or research participants a form to fill out? Microsoft Forms, Qualtrics surveys, and REDCap surveys are easy to create, can include “branching” (e.g., more questions for a new patient than an existing patient), and can be used to collect HIPAA data.

Using an electronic form or survey published on a BU webpage is a more secure method for collecting any type of data than emailing forms that need to be sent back by the patient. Beyond just the risks during transmission of the form, one risk we have seen all too often is that a well-meaning employee accidentally sends a form containing one patient’s data to another patient, resulting in a risk to patient privacy. This can’t happen with a solution like Microsoft Forms, Qualtrics surveys, or REDCap surveys.

**What are some examples of ways an electronic form or survey could be used?**

Any paper or fillable forms you use today could be converted into a form or survey. For example, consent or patient intake forms could be converted to Microsoft Forms, and posted on a BU webpage. Responses can then be retrieved or transferred from the Microsoft Forms webpage or from an Excel sheet that is posted on your Teams site. If you get frequent requests for copies of records, you could even post a Microsoft Form for patients to Authorize Disclosure of Records.

We have instructions for setting up Microsoft Forms and publishing to a BU webpage here: <https://www.bu.edu/hipaa/setting-up-a-microsoft-form/>. And since these will be posted publicly, available for anyone to fill out, please use Captcha feature to lower risk of malicious entries.

To get help with forms and surveys, send an email to [ithelp@bu.edu](mailto:ithelp@bu.edu) at Charles River Campus, and [bumchelp@bu.edu](mailto:bumchelp@bu.edu) at the Medical Campus. For questions on HIPAA compliance, send an email to [hipaa@bu.edu](mailto:hipaa@bu.edu).

Sincerely,  
David Corbett  
BUMC InfoSec Officer and HIPAA Security Officer



**Boston University** Information Security  
[buinfosec@bu.edu](mailto:buinfosec@bu.edu)  
[www.bu.edu/infosec](http://www.bu.edu/infosec)