

## Safety of Providing Personal Data

HCAI has collected patients' healthcare data securely for more than 30 years. HCAI meets and/or exceeds Federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) security standards.



For more information about HCAI and the State's collection of patient healthcare data please visit [hcai.ca.gov](http://hcai.ca.gov)



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## How Does the Department of Health Care Access and Information Use Personal Data?



## Use of Personal Data



By law hospitals and other health facilities are required to collect certain personal data from patients and provide this data to the Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI), including date of birth, Social Security Number (SSN) if available, preferred language spoken, race/ethnicity, patient address and other information.<sup>1</sup> Healthcare data is vital for research to improve the healthcare of all Californians.

Patient data provided to HCAI is used to study healthcare trends, track and improve the quality of care, and inform healthcare policy and research. For example, researchers have used this data to conduct cancer research, to prevent unnecessary readmissions through more effective care, to develop ways of preventing infections, and to track the outcomes of medical procedures.

## Protection of Personal Data



State and federal laws protect health information. Patient data is submitted to HCAI via a secure connection. As an example of HCAI's security measures, once received, the SSN is converted into a form that safely allows use for research but which cannot be decoded. This number, called a Record Linkage Number (RLN), cannot be used to identify the individual patient. Neither SSNs nor RLNs are ever published by HCAI.

<sup>1</sup>California Health and Safety Code Division 107, Part 5, Sections 128735, 128736 and 128737.