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## **NATIONAL ETHICS NEWS**

### **Final Changes to the HIPAA Privacy Rule**

Final changes to the HIPAA Privacy Rule became effective on October 15, 2002. The Privacy Rule is designed to maintain strong protections for individually identifiable health information. The final changes strengthen these protections, while attempting to minimize unintended effects on health care quality and access. The Privacy Rule is available on the Web at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/privrulepd.pdf>. The impact of HIPAA on human subjects protections is discussed in our [Legal Briefs](#) column.

### **Institute of Medicine Report on Protecting Research Participants**

The Institute of Medicine issued a report in October calling for a complete overhaul of the IRB system. The report cites several reasons why change is necessary, including gaps in the current IRB system and differences in the requirements for federally-funded versus privately-funded research. The report, entitled Responsible Research: A Systems Approach to Protecting Research Participants, is available on-line at: [www.iom.edu/iom/iomhome.nsf/Pages/Recently+Released+Reports](http://www.iom.edu/iom/iomhome.nsf/Pages/Recently+Released+Reports)