

# **DIGITAL ASSISTANTS**

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## **Policy Statement**

It is the policy of Belknap County Nursing Home to comply with Federal HIPAA rules and regulations.

## **Procedure**

Digital Assistants do not provide a HIPAA compliant guarantee. Therefore, Belknap County Nursing Home does not permit the use of Digital Assistants in the nursing home.

Examples of Digital Assistants include names such as "Amazon Alexa/Echo/Dot", "Google Assistant", "Microsoft Cortana", etc.

By definition, per the companies that offer them, these devices are not completely HIPAA compliant. They have at least two features that allow them to potentially violate HIPAA privacy rules:

1. A feature that allows "dropping in" and overhearing any confidential discussion that may be occurring in the room from a remote location without those in the room being aware.
2. A feature where stating the device name turns the device on (essentially anytime it is in use) and it records everything that is said and sends it to the cloud for company use. These recordings would include conversations/information that the company records and might use and/or distribute without the consent of those who may be participating in the conversation.

Detection of a Digital Assistant device being used in the nursing home is to be reported immediately to Administration.