PATIENT ID BAN AND WHY IT SHOULD BE REMOVED

WHAT IS A PATIENT ID?

A unique or national patient identifier is similar to a Social Security number, where a number code would be used across all providers to identify individual patients. This would replace the current system that uses a name, address, or date of birth. Patient Identifiers are thought to solve the issue of inconsistent patient matching.

The Patient ID ban prohibits the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) from funding, implementing, or developing a unique patient identifier system to eliminate or reduce the inconsistent patient matching.

WHY SHOULD THE PATIENT ID BAN BE REMOVED?

With the removal of the Patient ID ban, numerous incidents in healthcare that are due to patient mismatching would be reduced.

Incidents that can occur due to patient mismatching includes but are not limited to:
·Losing a loved one because he or she is mistaken for another patient, leading to a medical error.

· An infant given expressed breast milk from the wrong mother who was infected with hepatitis.

· A patient in cardiac arrest denied lifesaving care because the care team pulled the wrong patient's record and adhered to a do not resuscitate order.

· Opiates unknowingly prescribed to patients with a history of addiction.