**Application: System Security and Ease of Use**

For ethical, legal, and business reasons, the security of health care data must be a top priority in health care organizations. HIPAA, for example, requires that health care organizations safeguard patient data, and there are serious consequences for breaches of privacy. Yet organizations have many types of sensitive clinical or administrative information they need to protect. To make their systems secure, health care organizations put in place policies as well as technical safeguards such as encryption and passwords. There can be a tradeoff, however, between system security and ease of use by health care providers.

**Prepare for this Application Assignment as follows:**

* Select a type of health care organization, such as an outpatient clinic, nursing home, or hospital, and a specific department or function in this setting, such as a nursing unit, radiology department, or admissions, which would make use of sensitive health data. Bring to mind specific ways in which these data might be improperly accessed, lost, stolen, and so on.
* Review this week's Learning Resources, and conduct online research, as needed, to clarify for yourself the ramifications for individuals and organizations of security breaches in this department, and the solutions that have been devised to protect these data. In what ways might these security measures interfere with the staff's ease of use of the system? Consider how best to balance these competing interests of data security and convenience for staff.
* **All reference information must be peer reviewed and no more than three years old in APA format. Course Text:** *Handbook of Informatics for Nurses & Healthcare Professionals- Chapters 12,13, and 22*
* **Course Text**: *Health Care Information Systems: A Practical Approach for Health Care Management-chapters 3,10 and 11*

**Then write a 2- to 3-page paper that addresses the following:**

* Describe key challenges for your selected health care department in ensuring that its sensitive data are secure. Illustrate with specific examples, and address not only technological issues but also human factors involved in ensuring its system security.
* What are some implications of security breaches of its health care data? Who might be impacted and how?
* Summarize security measures that might be taken as well as their potential impact on the staff's ease of use of the information system.
* Explain what you believe is the appropriate balance between data security and ease of use.