

A 'Chinging' Sound

Move over, Art Linkletter! Nursing home residents say the darndest things, too.

Michelle Donahue, executive director at the Citadel Care Center in Mesa, Arizona, shared this story with me late Monday afternoon. "Recently, we installed our RITA computer system here at Citadel. We decided to use the wall mount system for ease of associate usage, and we are in hopes that this is just the beginning of computerized charting, and so we wanted to be prepared to have a sufficient number of computer terminals to accommodate all of the staff. Over the past several weeks, we have been training our associates on the system.

"Lately, we've noticed a number of our residents 'hanging around' the wall mounts, watching the associates use the computer. We became concerned about HIPPA requirements, so the staff has been instructed to be mindful of residents around the area and block the screens with their bodies. We've also contacted IS about ways to obscure the screens (and the data) to protect residents' privacy. So far, our blocking system is working, however ...

"This morning, Kate (Donahue, Michelle's daughter, a nursing student in California who took the CNA class at Citadel and is working there for a few weeks) was inputting her RITA data and one of our residents, Walter, was lurking around the terminal. You are probably aware that the system makes 'chinging'-type noises when data is inputted. Walter listened for a moment and then said, 'Do you ever win anything?' Kate turned to him and said, 'No, I never win a thing.' Being in Arizona, where casinos abound, it was easy to figure out what Walter was talking about.

"This gives a whole new perspective to the residents lurking around the terminal. I guess they want to know when it's their turn!"

--Beecher Hunter