Policy Update: Verbal Consents in Lieu of Patient Signatures
Effective 3/19/20

To minimize the infection control risks related to sharing pens and clipboards during the COVID-19 outbreak, Beth Israel Lahey Health (BILH) is temporarily suspending certain patient signature requirements.

All BILH staff and physicians may obtain consent and other required signatures by providing a verbal explanation of the risks and benefits to the patient, and documenting the conversation and the patient's consent with specificity in the medical record and other required forms of documentation.

- In clinical settings: This includes documenting verbal consent directly on a patient consent form, including the date and the signature of the clinician consenting the patient, and noting that the patient's consent was made verbally. This process also applies to discharge paperwork and other forms completed and signed by the patient during the course of care.

- In administrative settings: This includes staff fully explaining and documenting verbal consent on financial forms, acknowledgment of Notice of Privacy Practices and other administrative forms.

Please consult with your assigned Office of General Counsel (OGC) counsel for additional guidance regarding consent for telehealth visits.