

## LHC seeks to prevent ID theft

You're probably used to showing your insurance card when at the hospital or clinic, but an ID?

Showing ID could become part of the new routine that aims to prevent identity theft at Livingston HealthCare facilities, such as Livingston Memorial Hospital.

The Federal Trade Commission this year begins enforcing what is called the Red Flags Rule. The law requires that certain health care organizations create and implement their own identity theft programs.

Those plans call for components such as identifying red flags for identity theft that a health care group might see in its individual practice as well as steps for preventing identity theft, according to the FTC Web site.

LHC's Red Flag plan spells out that in some circumstances, patients could be asked for ID, said Lea Chatham, LHC marketing/foundation assistant.

Medical identity theft includes someone using another person's name, Social Security number, health insurance information, etc.

Such a theft "can create a false medical record — potentially jeopardizing future care for the victim," according to a news release from LHC.

Federal data shows that more than 250,000 Americans were victims of medical identity theft in 2007, according to LHC.