# Managing Patient Consent on the eCHN Portal

## User Guide/Manual

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## 1. What is eCHN?

The electronic Child Health Network (eCHN) is a non-profit government-funded organization which provides electronic services to health information custodian clients such as hospitals, Community Care Access Centres, health care group practices and independent health care practitioners. eCHN provides custodians and their authorized users with access to an electronic health records repository known as WebChart, which facilitates the secure disclosure of personal health information (PHI) between health information custodians in Ontario. Access to the patient information in eCHN is provided solely to support the provision of health care. The data available on eCHN must not be used for research or any secondary purpose.

The information available via the eCHN Portal's WebChart application includes:

- Laboratory Data and Microbiology Reports
- Diagnostic Images and Reports
- Medication Administration Reports
- Admission, Discharge and Transfer Records
- Treatment notes and Alerts
- Cardiology
- Newborn Screening
- Scanned Documents
- Demographics

The data within the eCHN system may not be a complete health record. Information in the eCHN WebChart application is contributed from custodian organizations[1] in Ontario. Contributing clients are not obligated to submit the entire chart for any given patient record.

It is strictly prohibited for authorized users to access the PHI from the WebChart application for research or data mining purposes. eCHN WebChart access may be audited by members of the eCHN Privacy Office or by Privacy Officers from client organizations to ensure appropriate access/use of patient data by users.

[1] Health Information Custodians as defined in PHIPA Section 3(1) 1 – 4.

## 2. Patient Consent

The *Personal Health Information Act, 2004* (PHIPA) outlines the requirement that the knowledge and consent of an individual patient is required for the collection, use or disclosure of PHI, notwithstanding any exceptions in the statute. If a patient has not yet reached the age of majority within their province, or is not considered a mature minor, then consent may be granted/revoked by the patient's parent(s), guardian or substitute decision maker (SDM).

Consent for the transfer of patient data to eCHN is managed by each contributing client in accordance with their policies and procedures. Client organizations that submit PHI to eCHN must ensure that they have followed the consent requirements of PHIPA prior to releasing the data. Additionally, authorized eCHN users must ensure they are operating in compliance with PHIPA and their organization's consent protocols, as they pertain to the viewing of patient charts/records for the provision of care.

A patient who has provided their consent to a contributing eCHN client for the transfer of their PHI to eCHN may, at any time, withdraw that consent. Requests for changes to consent directives from a patient must be made by the patient to the contributing eCHN client organization.

### 2.1. What is Implied Consent?

Implied consent is not expressly granted by an individual, but rather a consent which can be inferred from the individual's actions, or in some cases their inaction/silence in a particular situation.

For example when a patient visits a health care provider, that patient is expected to supply relevant information to the provider in order to receive the appropriate care. This is an example of "implied consent" where the patient doesn't necessarily need to be asked "do you consent to provide your health information in order to receive treatment?" The actions of the patient imply that consent is granted for the collection of relevant patient health information.

### 2.2. What is Express Consent?

Express consent is a clear and voluntary preference or choice which is freely given in circumstances where the individual has been advised of the available options and the consequences of their decision. Express consent in a health care setting is often documented through the use of a consent form, waiver, or by other means of recording an individual's affirmation.

PHIPA requires that the express consent of a patient be gained in situations where:

a. a health information custodian is going to disclose data to a person that is not a HIC, or
b. where a HIC makes a disclosure of PHI to another health information custodian for purposes other than the provision of care. [2]

### 2.3. Emergency Situations and Consent

PHIPA also outlines situations under which a custodian may disclose PHI to other health information custodian(s) in order to reduce the significant risk of serious bodily harm to an individual. In such situations

[2] PHIPA, section 18(3)

of potential serious bodily harm, the disclosure of PHI maybe made without the consent of the individual to whom the information relates. One such exception to consent occurs when it is impossible or impractical to obtain consent, such as with emergency medical situations.

Additional information emergency overrides can be found in section 3.5 of this guide.

## 2.4. Consent Management at eCHN

eCHN has developed consent management tools to assist clients with the application of patient consent directives related to eCHN. Various methods are employed by eCHN to manage both access consent to a patient's PHI and transactional consent for the receipt and posting of a patient's PHI.

At eCHN, an **"Access"** consent restriction is when a patient blocks access to their PHI which exists in the eCHN system. An access consent restriction maybe requested by a client to block access to a patients' full chart or to specific records found within that chart. It is up to each Client to determine which access restriction option best aligns with their organization's consent policy rules.

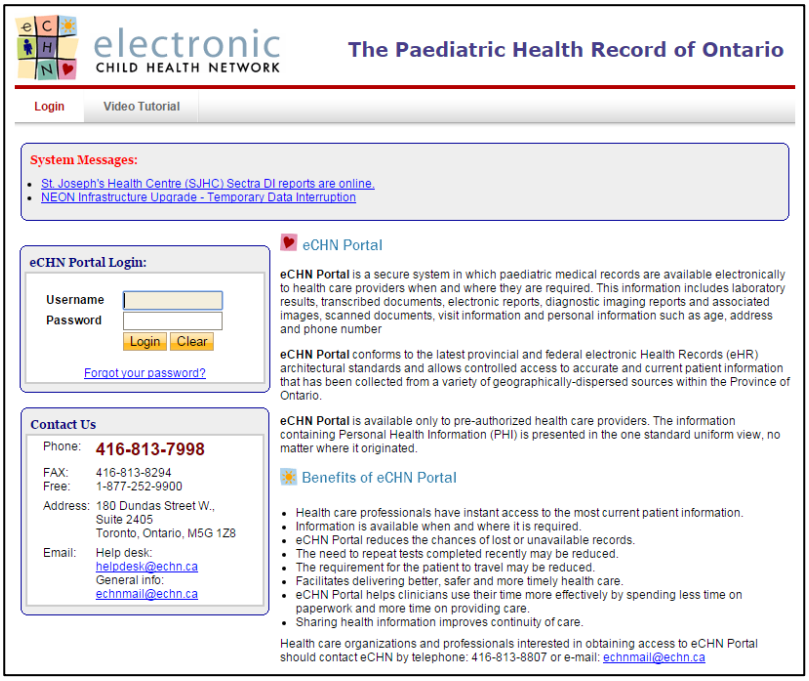
A **"Transactional"** consent restriction is when a patient withdraws their consent for the transmission of their PHI from a contributing client site to eCHN and/or posting of their patient data to WebChart. Once transactional consent blocks are put in place, data transmission/posting stops from that point in time forward, not retroactively.

# 3. Using the Consent Management Application

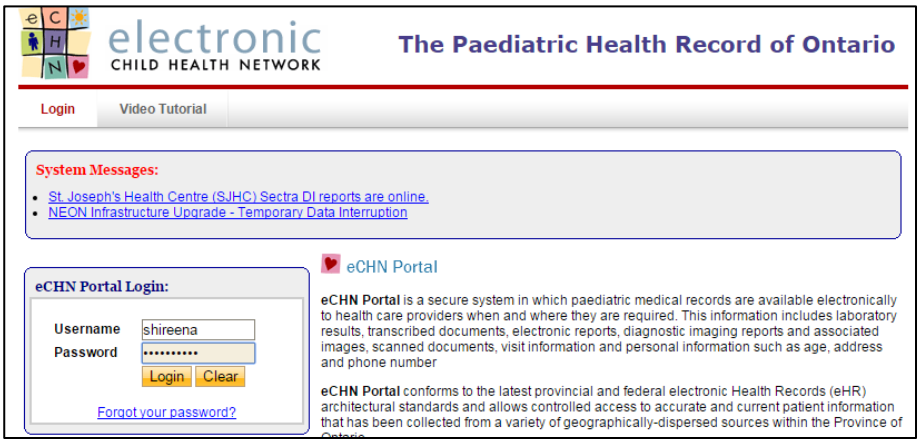
## 3.1 Logging Onto to eCHN

3.1.1 To access the eCHN Consent Management application, navigate to the eCHN Portal login page at https://hinet.echn.ca.

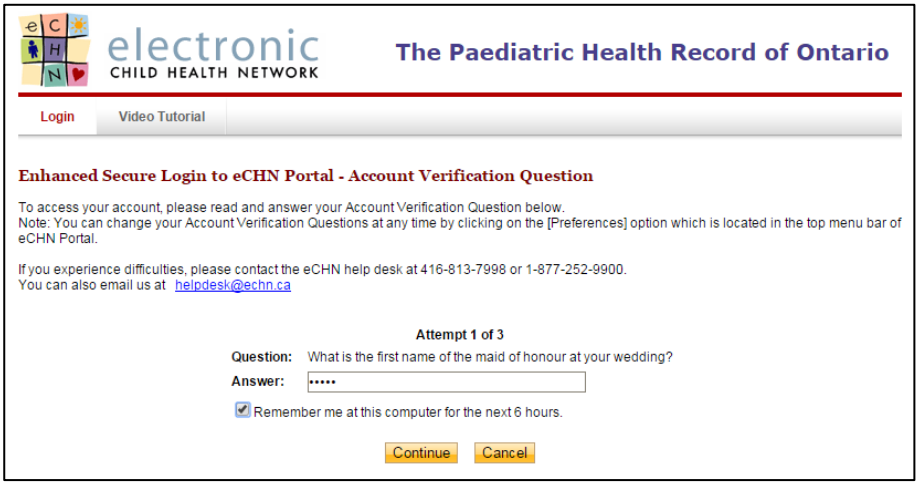
Note: The eCHN Portal is only available to authorized users. In order to become an authorized user please request an eCHN Portal Access Application Form from the eCHN Helpdesk at 416-813-7998 or by email at helpdesk@echn.ca.




3.1.2 Enter your username and password in the eCHN Portal Login box. Select the yellow *Login* button to continue.

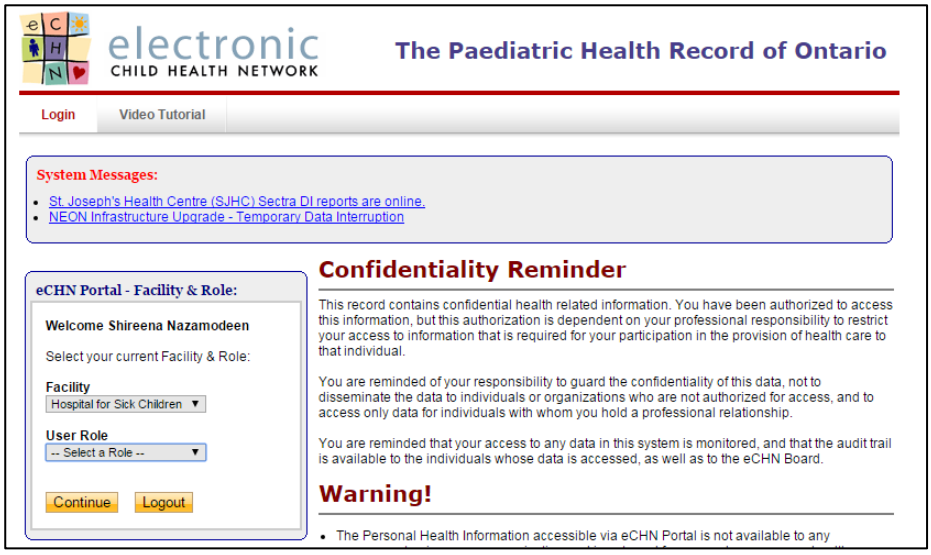


3.1.3 Enter the answer to your Account Verification Question and select the yellow *Continue* button.



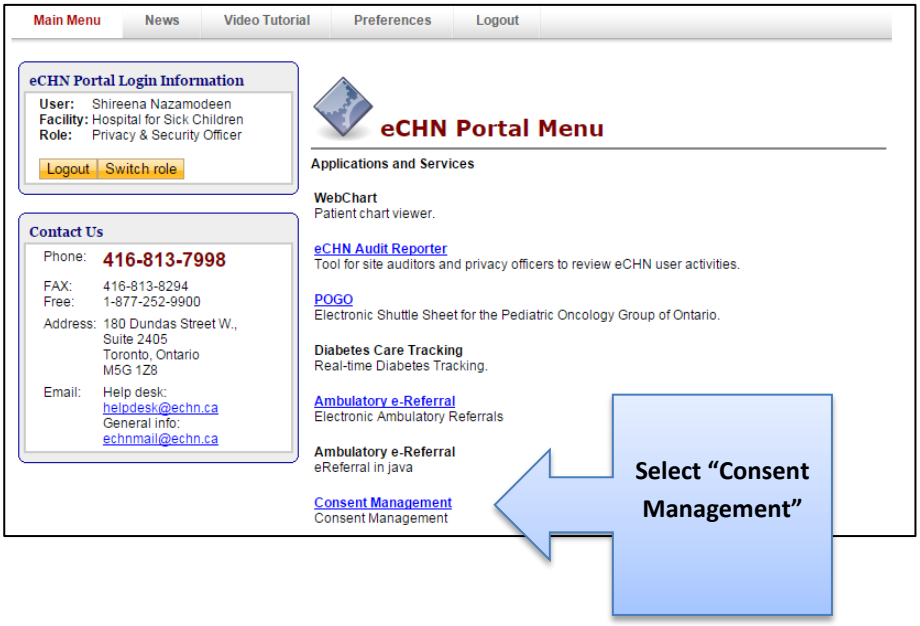

3.1.4 Verify your Facility and User Role as displayed within the eCHN Portal – Facility & Role box.

Note: If the facility/user role displayed is not accurate please contact the eCHN Helpdesk at 416-813-7998 or helpdesk@echn.ca for assistance. If you are authorized for more than one role/facility you must select the appropriate role/facility for the task being performed and select the yellow *Continue* button.

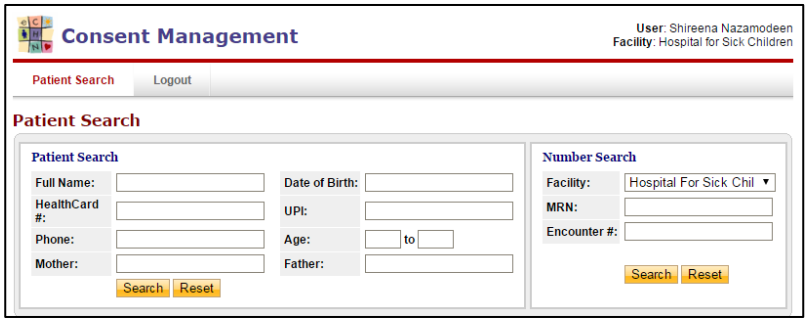


## 3.2 Conducting a Patient Search in the Consent Management Tool

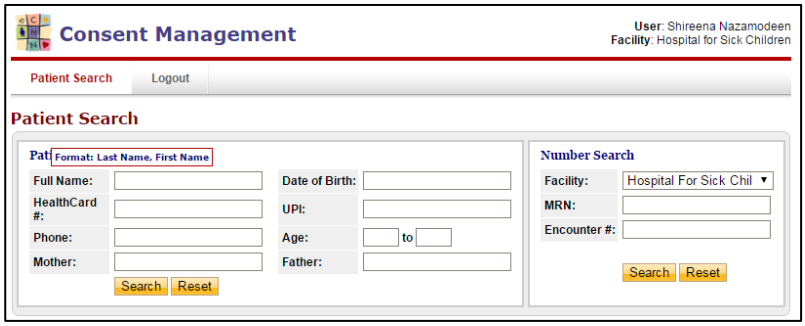
3.2.1 From the eCHN Portal Menu click on the blue highlighted and underlined *Consent Management* link.



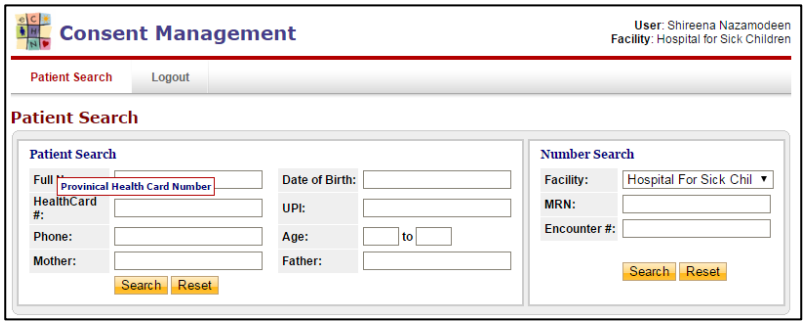

3.2.2 Search for the patient requesting consent revocation or reinstatement. By entering the patient details into the Patient Search fields. For an optimal search, best practice is to enter information into one of three data fields: Full Name, Health Card # or MRN.



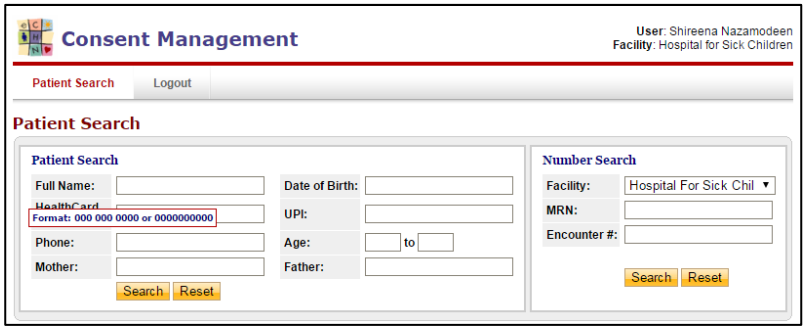

- When entering information into the "Full Name" field, enter the patient's name using the following format: lastname, firstname (e.g Smith, John).



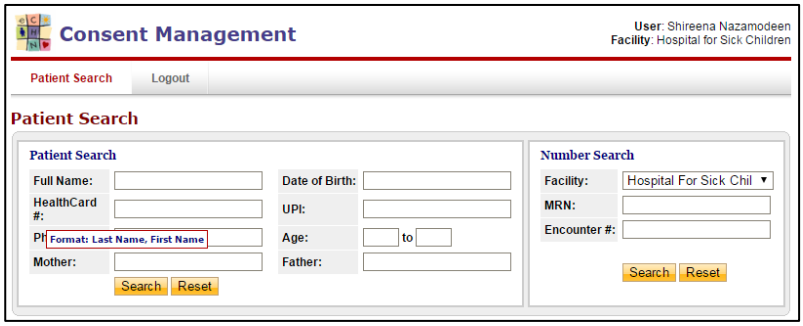

- In the "HealthCard #" field, please enter the patient's Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) card number without the version code.



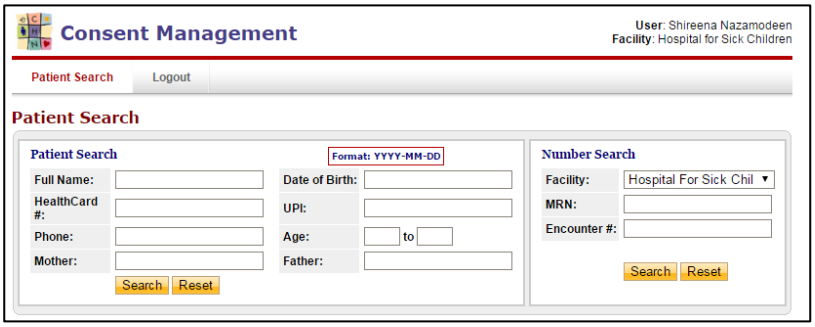

- Should you opt to search by phone number, , avoid using dashes (-) in the "Phone" field. Example: 4168137998.



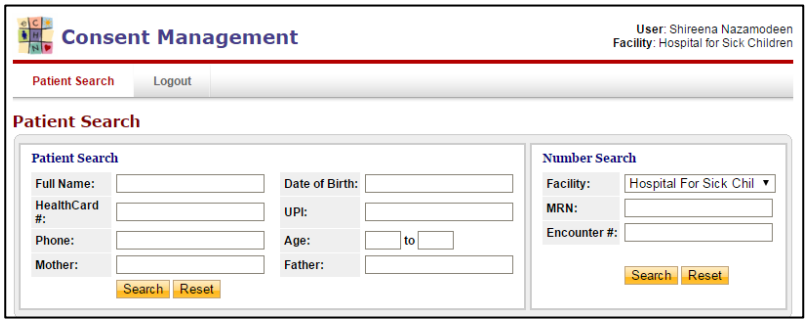

- If conducting a search using the names of the patient's mother or father, use the following format to enter the names: lastname, firstname.



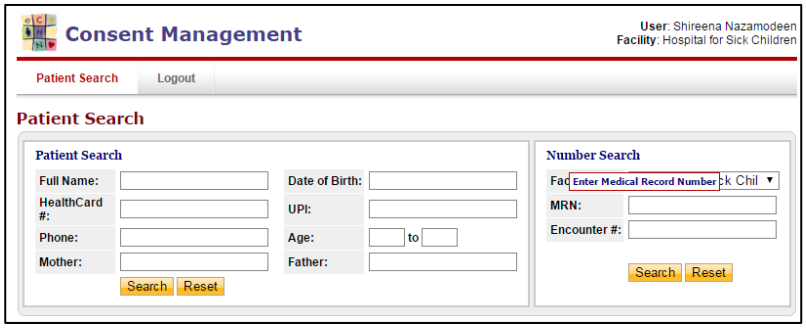

- In the "Date of Birth" field, enter the numbers as year-month-day. Example: for January 31, 2010, enter 2010-01-31.



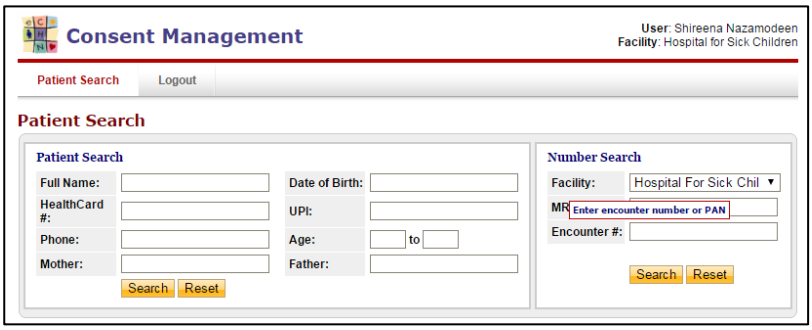

- The "Facility" field will default to the facility you selected/verified in step 3.1.4.




- If searching by "MRN" , please enter the medical record number associated with the patient at your facility.

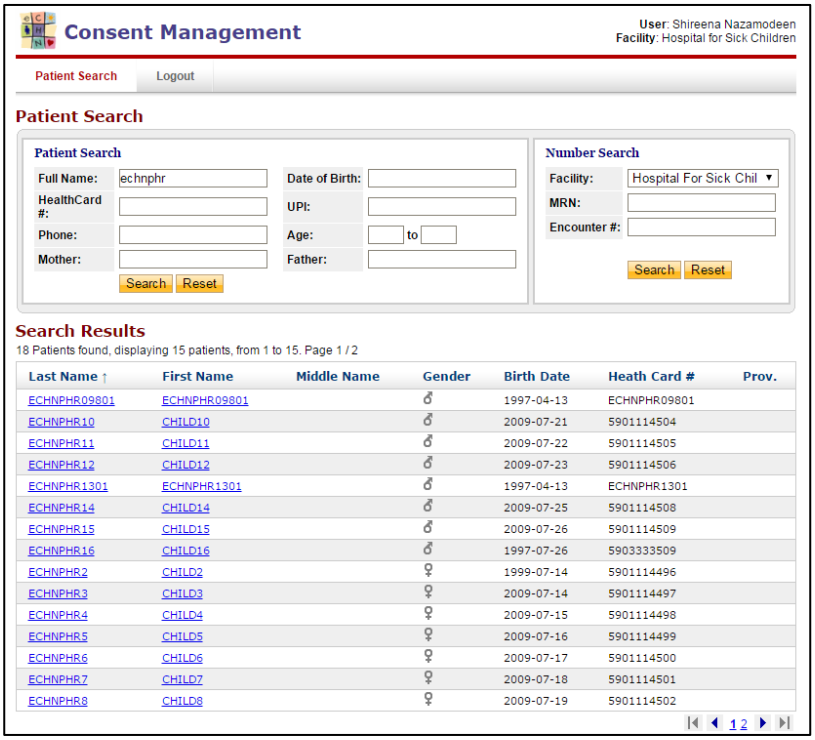



- The "Encounter #" is a unique identifier assigned by a hospital to a patient and represents a specific hospital visit.

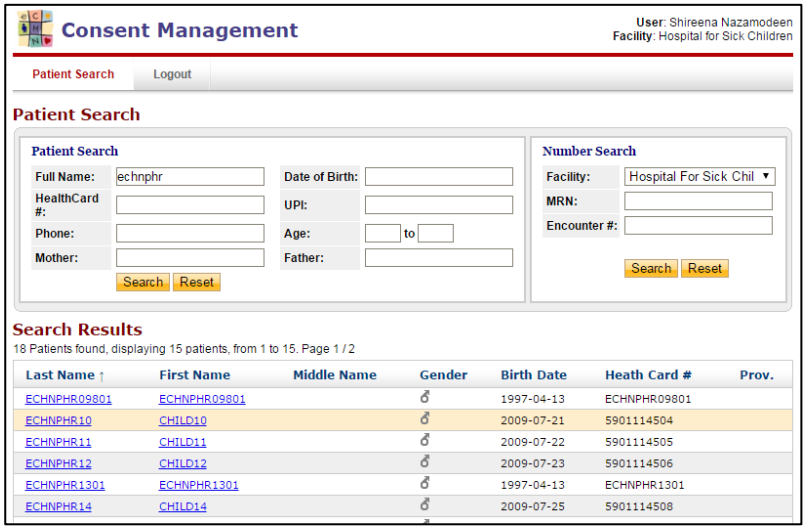



3.2.3 Once you have entered data into the Patient Search fields, select the *Search* button. The results will be displayed based on the information entered.

Note: You will only be provided with a list of patients from your facility.




3.2.4 Select the correct patient from the search results by clicking on the blue highlighted and underlined patient name.




3.2.5 The Consent Summary for the selected patient will be displayed. Verify the patient's demographic information before proceeding with consent revocation or reinstatement. If this is not the correct patient, go back to the search results by clicking on the yellow *Back To Search Results* button.

Consent Management
User: Shireena Nazamodeen
Facility: Hospital for Sick Children
Patient Search
Logout
Back To Search Results
Consent Summary - ECHNPHR10, CHILD10
Patient Information
First Name: CHILD10
Middle Name:
Last Name: ECHNPHR10
Date of Birth: 2009/07/21
Gender: Male
HCN: 5901114504
Access Consent
* Hover your mouse over the table items for more information
Chart Access Consent
Status: Permitted
Revoke Consent
Document Access (Lockbox) Consent
Request Summary Count (no completed or pending requests)
Request Form
Transactional Consent
1 Unique MRNs (no revoked or pending requests)
Request Form
"Back to Search Results"

## 3.3 Applying an Access Restriction to a Patient Chart

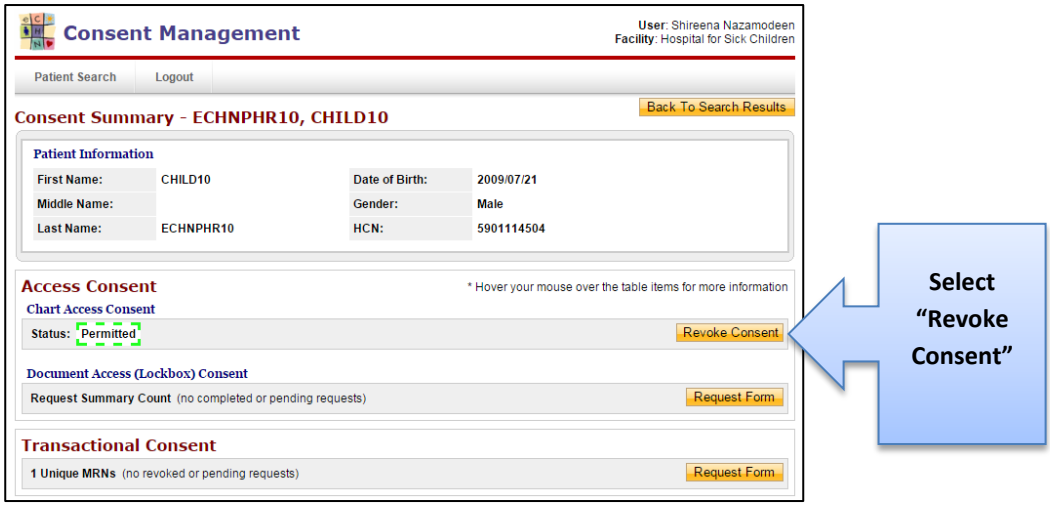
***Access Consent at eCHN***

An "Access" consent restriction is when a patient blocks access to their PHI which exists in the eCHN system. Access consent blocks are communicated from the patient to the contributing client. Each client must notify eCHN of the access consent restrictions requested by the patient. eCHN will promptly process all consent directives upon notification by the client.

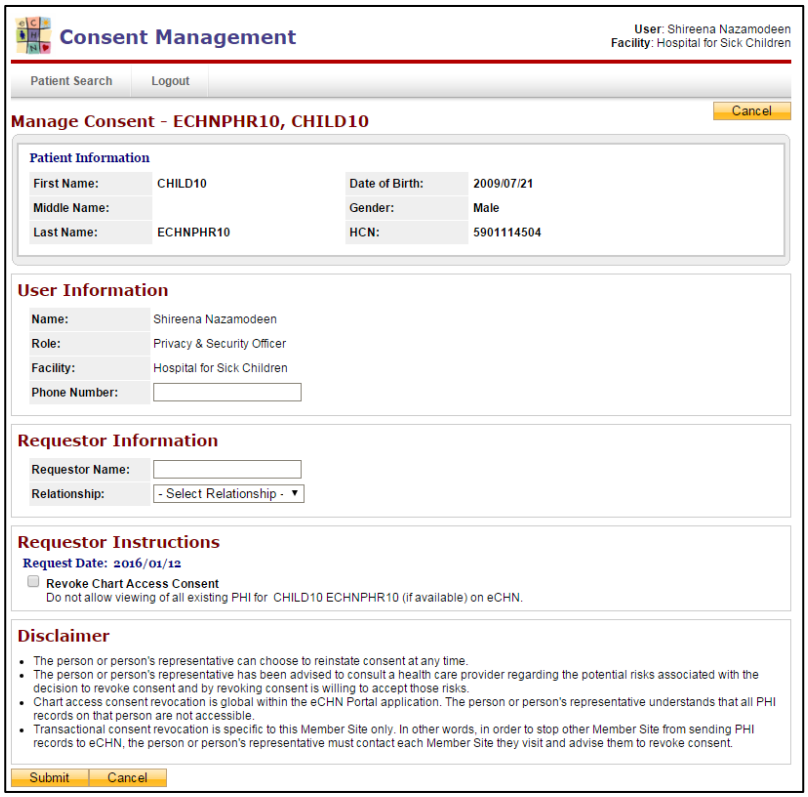
The functionality exists in eCHN to apply access restrictions to a patient's full chart or to specific records found within a patient chart. Chart level access restrictions may be applied to an entire patient chart by any client that contributed data to eCHN for the relevant patient. It is up the client to determine if they will apply a chart level or document-specific access restriction to a patient chart.

3.3.1 To apply an access consent restriction to a patient chart, first you must search and select the relevant patient. Please follow the instructions in section 3.1 and 3.2 of this guide to learn how to login to the eCHN Portal, enter the Consent Management tool and select a patient.

After a patient has been selected, request a Chart Access Consent revocation by choosing the yellow *Revoke Consent* button.

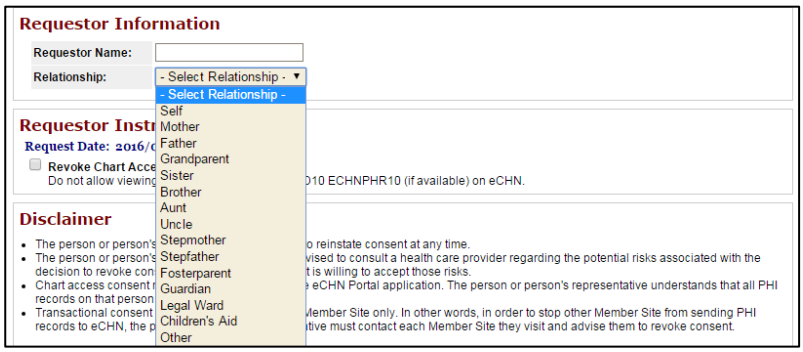


3.3.2 The Manage Consent page will be displayed. All blank fields are mandatory and must be completed in order to submit the request.

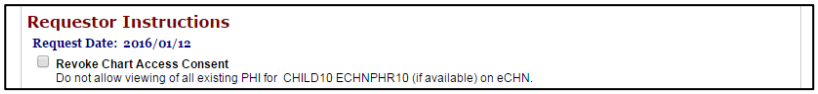



- The User Information section confirms the details of the authorized user (you) performing the requested consent directive. The "Phone Number" is required so eCHN may follow-up on any questions regarding the request.

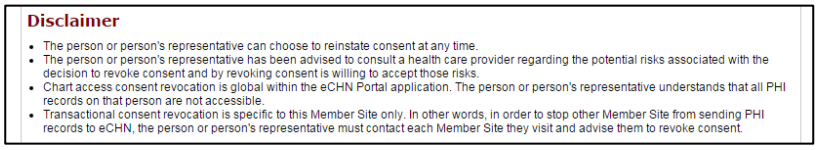
- The Requestor Information section prompts the user to select details about the individual making the request for revocation/reinstatement of consent. Use the dropdown menu to choose the requestor's relationship to the patient.



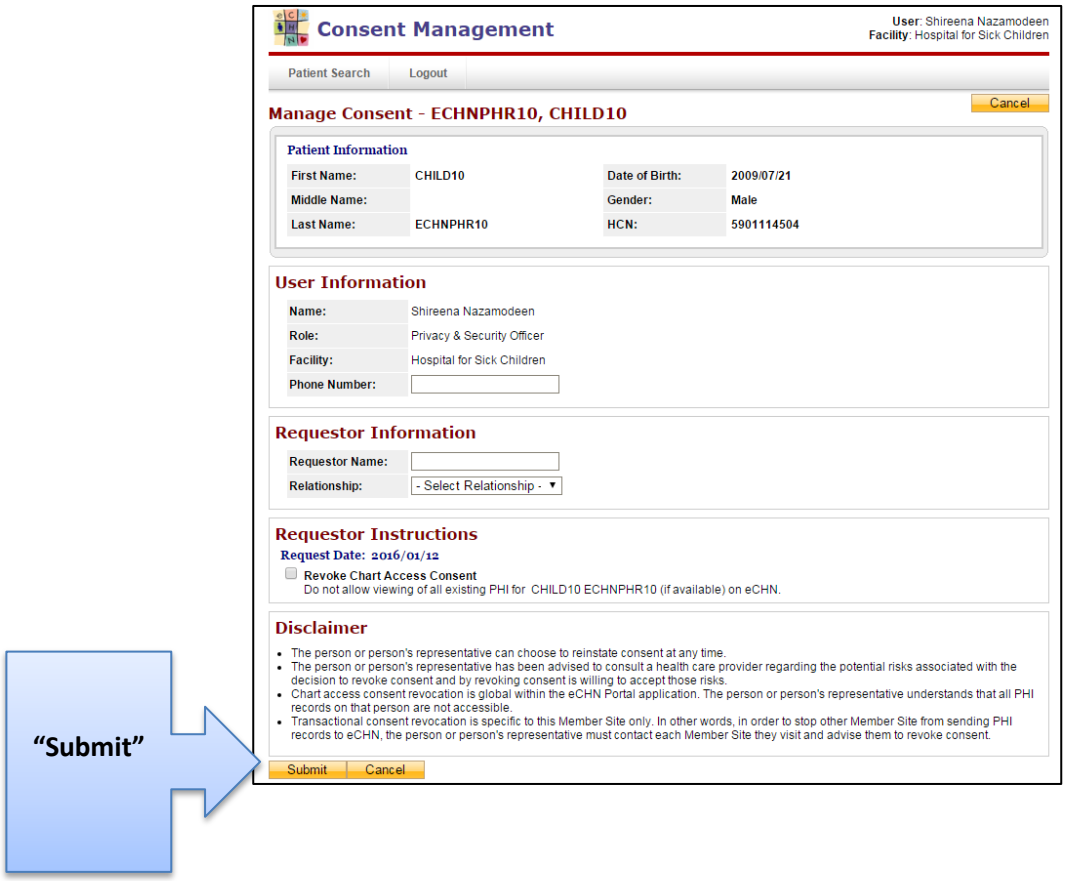

- The Requestor Instructions section requires the user to click in the checkbox to confirm revocation or reinstatement of consent for the specific patient.




- The Disclaimer provides general information on the results of consent withdrawal for patient data that is in the eCHN system.



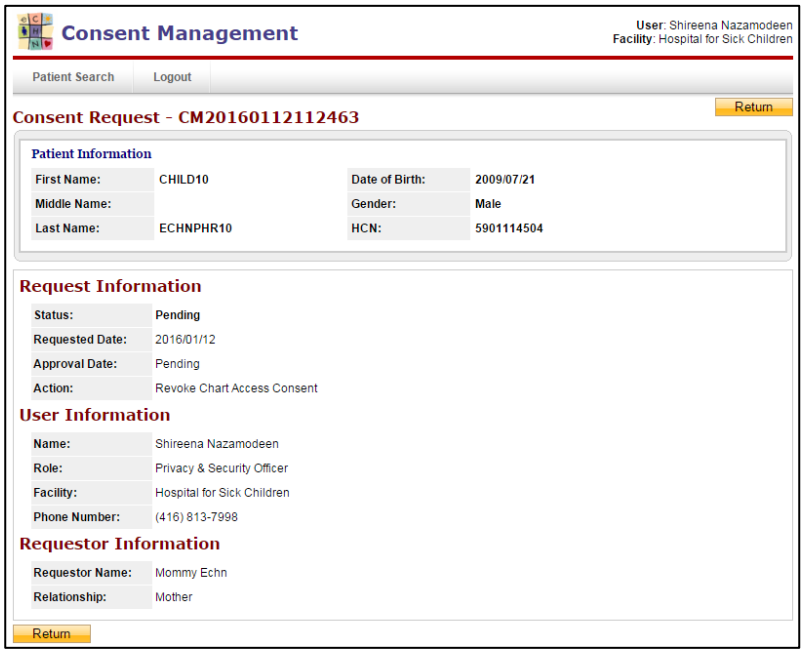
3.3.3 Once all the required information has been entered, select the yellow *Submit* button at the bottom of the page.



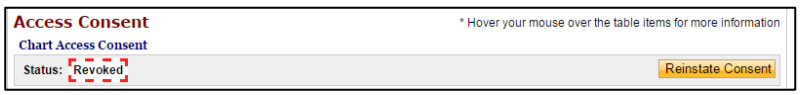

3.3.4 Once submitted, the Status (highlighted in green) will change to "Permitted, Pending Revocation", for this specific patient's Chart Access Consent.

Note: An ECR Code is assigned to each consent change request, along with the date the request was submitted, the authorized eCHN user who entered the request, the name of the requestor, the type of request made (revoke or reinstate), and the status of the request.

3.3.5 To view the details of the submitted consent request, you may select the ECR code link. The request status and general information will be available for viewing by the user.



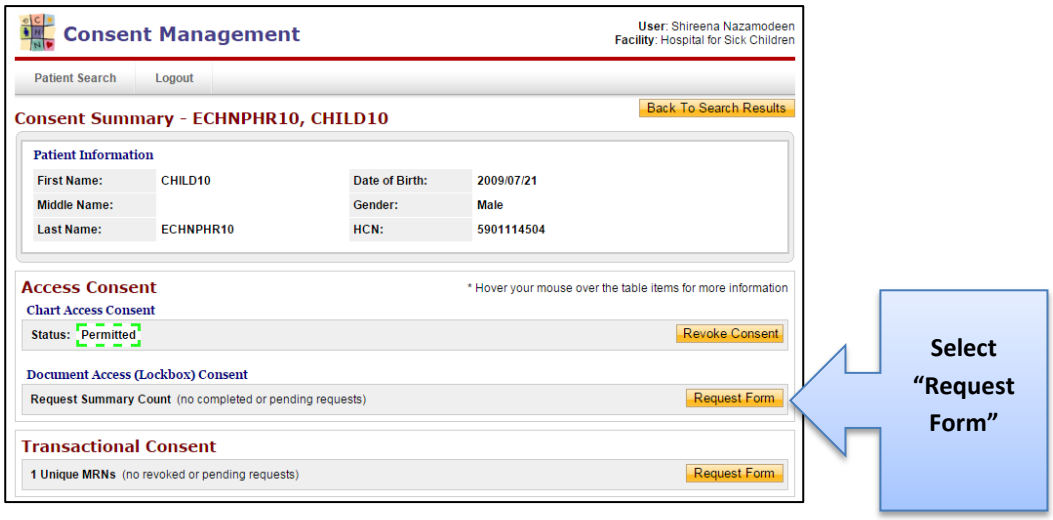

3.3.6 Once a consent request is processed by the eCHN Privacy Office you will see the Status (highlighted in red) change to Revoked.



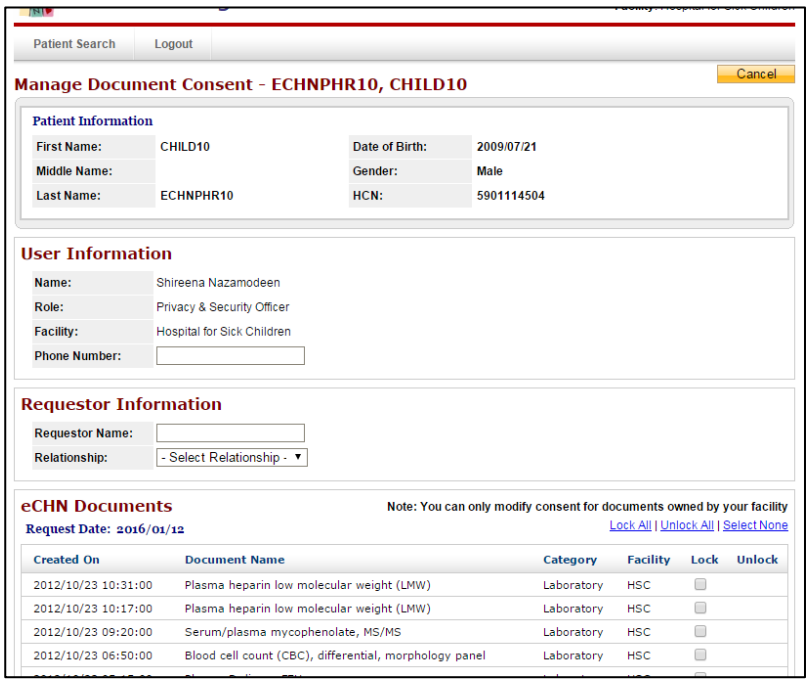
## 3.4 Applying an Access Restriction to a Patient Record(s) within a Chart – "Lockbox"

3.4.1 To apply an access consent restriction to a patient record(s), first you must search and select the relevant patient. Please follow the instructions in section 3.1 and 3.2 of this guide to learn how to login to the eCHN Portal, enter the Consent Management tool and select a patient.

After a patient has been selected, request a Document Access (Lockbox) Consent revocation by choosing the yellow *Request Form* button.

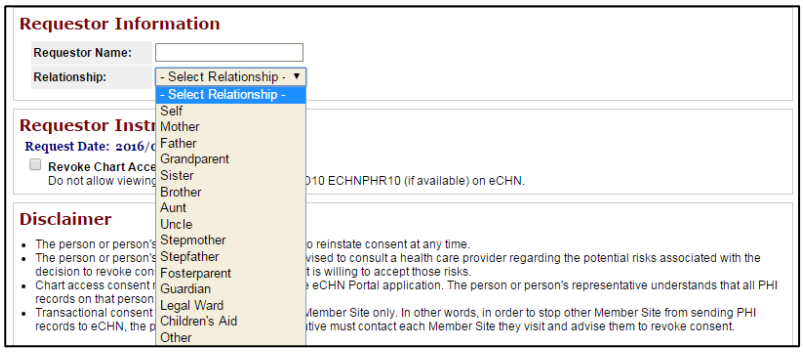



3.4.2 The Manage Consent page will be displayed. All blank fields are mandatory and must be completed in order to submit the request.

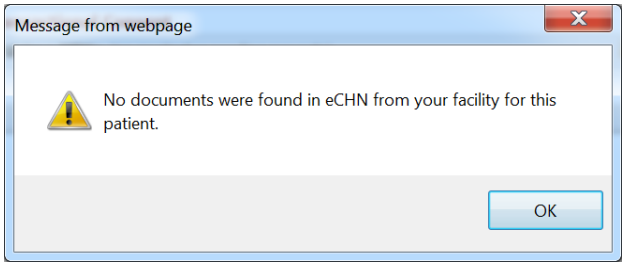


- The User Information section confirms the details of the authorized user (you) performing the requested consent directive. The "Phone Number" is required so eCHN may follow-up on any questions regarding the request.

- The Requestor Information section prompts the user to select details about the individual making the request for revocation/reinstatement of consent. Use the dropdown menu to choose the requestor's relationship to the patient.

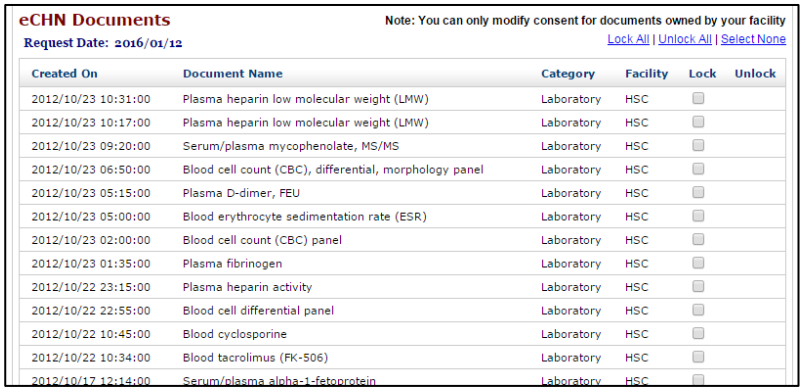



- The eCHN Documents section shows a list of records in eCHN associated with the selected patient. If no records are available in eCHN for the patient, a message will be shown to the user as follows:



If there are records in eCHN for the selected patient, a request to lock or unlock one or more records can be submitted. Select the appropriate record(s) by clicking on the checkbox next to the record. To "Lock" a record, select the checkbox in the "Lock" column.

Note: You will only be provided with a list of records from your facility.



**eCHN Documents**

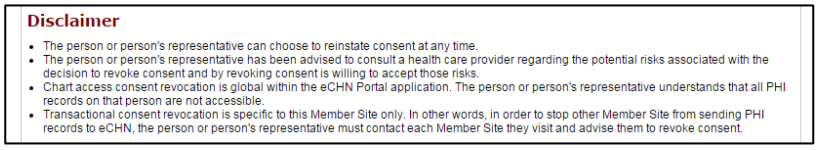
**Request Date: 2016/01/12**

Note: You can only modify consent for documents owned by your facility

Lock All | Unlock All | Select None

| Created On | Document Name | Category | Facility | Lock | Unlock |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2012/10/23 10:31:00 | Plasma heparin low molecular weight (LMW) | Laboratory | HSC | ☐ | |
| 2012/10/23 10:17:00 | Plasma heparin low molecular weight (LMW) | Laboratory | HSC | ☐ | |
| 2012/10/23 09:20:00 | Serum/plasma mycophenolate, MS/MS | Laboratory | HSC | ☐ | |
| 2012/10/23 06:50:00 | Blood cell count (CBC), differential, morphology panel | Laboratory | HSC | ☐ | |
| 2012/10/23 05:15:00 | Plasma D-dimer, FEU | Laboratory | HSC | ☐ | |
| 2012/10/23 05:00:00 | Blood erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR) | Laboratory | HSC | ☐ | |
| 2012/10/23 02:00:00 | Blood cell count (CBC) panel | Laboratory | HSC | ☐ | |
| 2012/10/23 01:35:00 | Plasma fibrinogen | Laboratory | HSC | ☐ | |
| 2012/10/22 23:15:00 | Plasma heparin activity | Laboratory | HSC | ☐ | |
| 2012/10/22 22:55:00 | Blood cell differential panel | Laboratory | HSC | ☐ | |
| 2012/10/22 10:45:00 | Blood cyclosporine | Laboratory | HSC | ☐ | |
| 2012/10/22 10:34:00 | Blood tacrolimus (FK-506) | Laboratory | HSC | ☐ | |
| 2012/10/17 12:14:00 | Serum/plasma alpha-1-fetoprotein | Laboratory | HSC | ☐ | |

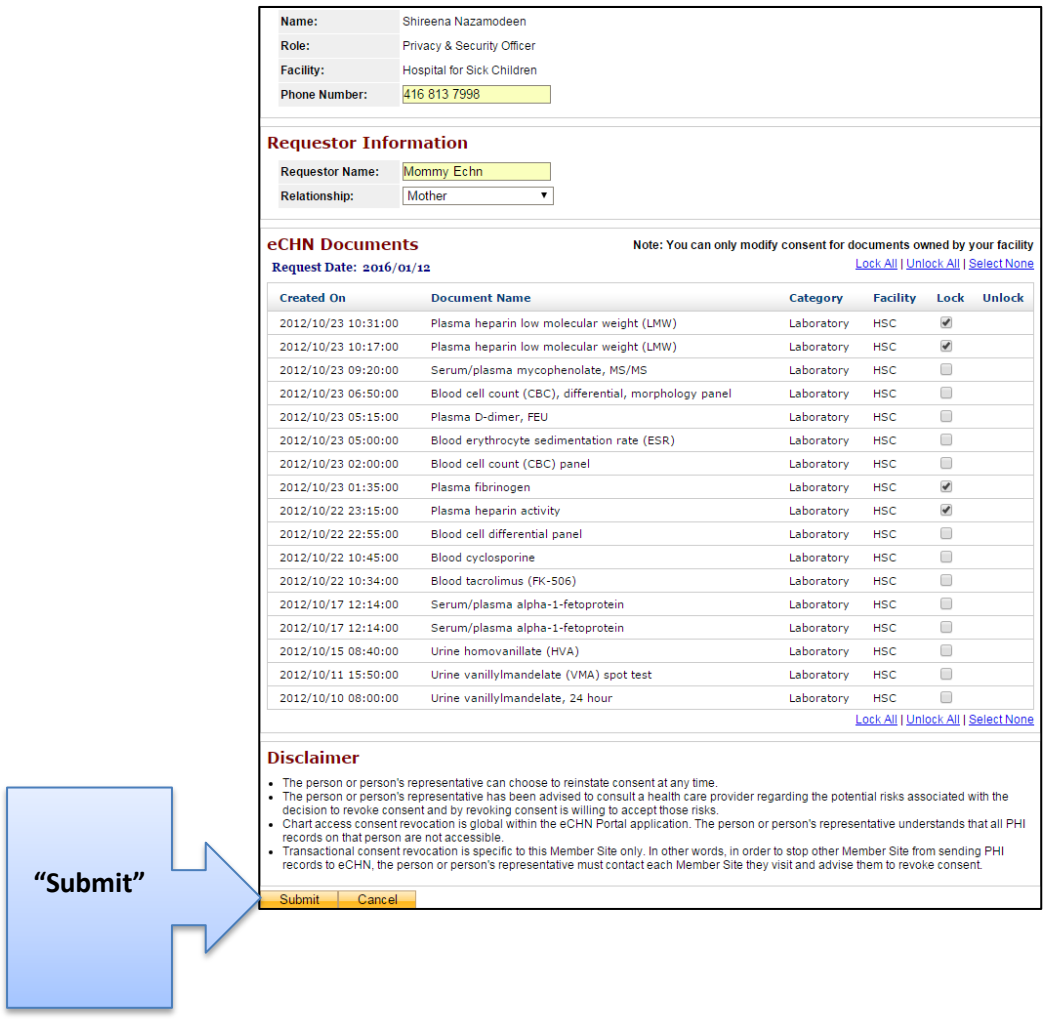
- The Disclaimer provides general information on the results of consent withdrawal for patient data that is in the eCHN system.



**Disclaimer**

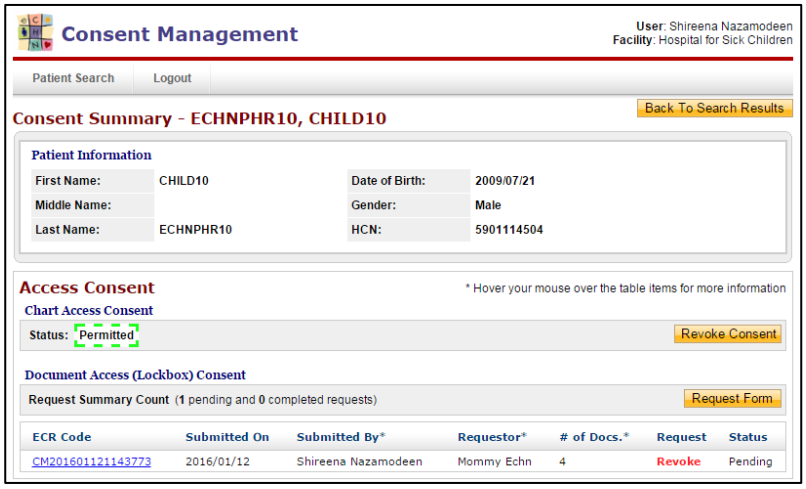
- The person or person's representative can choose to reinstate consent at any time.
- The person or person's representative has been advised to consult a health care provider regarding the potential risks associated with the decision to revoke consent and by revoking consent is willing to accept those risks.
- Chart access consent revocation is global within the eCHN Portal application. The person or person's representative understands that all PHI records on that person are not accessible.
- Transactional consent revocation is specific to this Member Site only. In other words, in order to stop other Member Site from sending PHI records to eCHN, the person or person's representative must contact each Member Site they visit and advise them to revoke consent.

3.4.3 Once all the information has been entered and the records to be locked are selected, submit the request using the yellow *Submit* button at the bottom of the page.

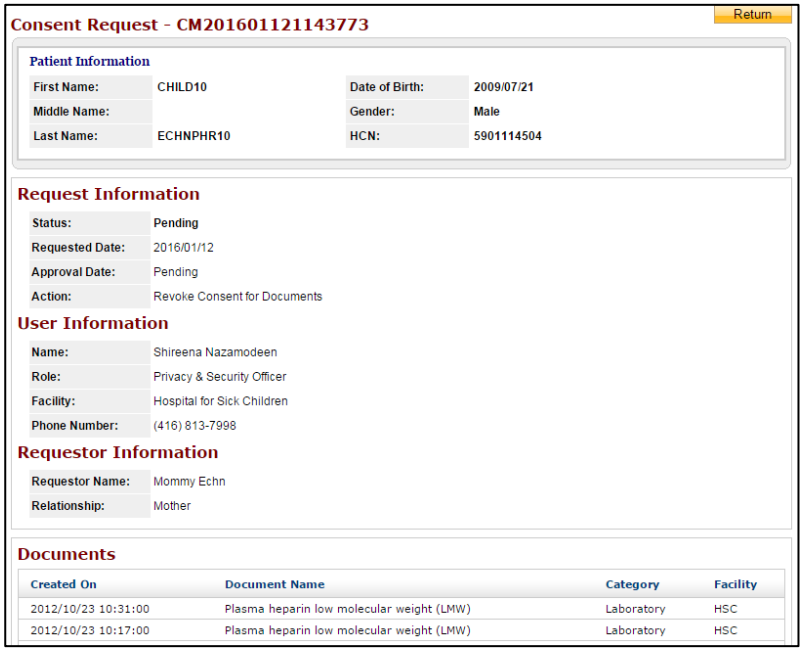



3.4.4 The Request Summary Count now displays (1 pending and 0 completed requests) for the patient's Document Access (Lockbox) Consent. This signifies that there is 1 request submitted by the user for processing by eCHN.

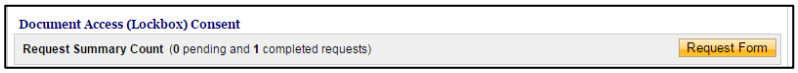
Note: An ECR Code is assigned to each consent change request, along with the date the request was submitted, the authorized eCHN user who entered the request, the name of the requestor, the type of request made (revoke or reinstate), and the status of the request.




3.4.5 To view the details of the submitted consent request, you may select the ECR code link. The request status and general information will be available for viewing by the user.




3.4.6 Once the request is processed by the eCHN Privacy Office you will see the Request Summary Count change to (0 pending and 1 completed request).



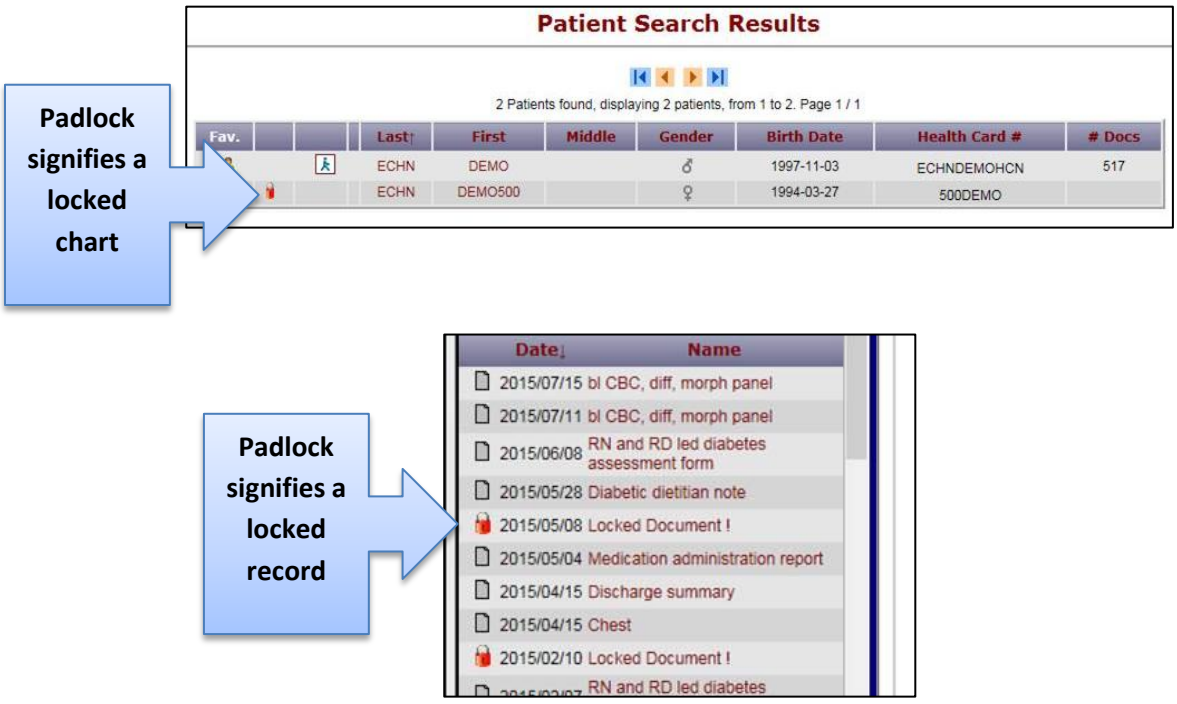
## 3.5 Emergency Override of an Access Restriction

In rare circumstances a physician treating a patient may need emergency access to locked data in a chart. In these cases, the patient may provide their consent to override the lock previously applied to their chart or record.

In emergency situations where the patient is not able to provide consent for viewing locked data, the WebChart application allows for an "EMERGENCY REQUEST OVERRIDE" of the consent lock on the chart or records. This override is only available to authorized eCHN users that are registered with a "Physician" role.

Once a chart or records have been locked, any eCHN user attempting to access the patient's locked data in WebChart will be presented with an alert, advising the user that the patient has revoked consent to the patient data being requested.

3.5.1. Patient search results will identify a locked patient chart by showing a padlock beside the name of the patient. For specific records within a patient chart, a padlock will appear next to the locked record.



3.5.2. If the locked chart or record is selected by a user, the following "PRIVACY ALERT" will be displayed.

3.5.3. If the user is registered as a physician in the eCHN Portal, they may select the *Emergency Request* button as shown on the screen above.

3.5.4. The physician must indicate if their access override is to support a clinical emergency, or if the access override has been granted directly by the patient (express consent). The user may then select the *Confirm Request* button to view the chart.

All other authorized eCHN users will receive the following Privacy Alert when they select a locked patient's chart.

**A consent override by any physician will trigger an immediate notification to the eCHN Privacy and Security Office and a subsequent audit will be initiated to review the circumstances for the override. Emergency override audits will be conducted in cooperation with the Privacy Officer from the site where the event occurred.**

## 3.6 Applying a Transactional Consent Restriction through the Consent Management Application

***Transactional Consent at eCHN***

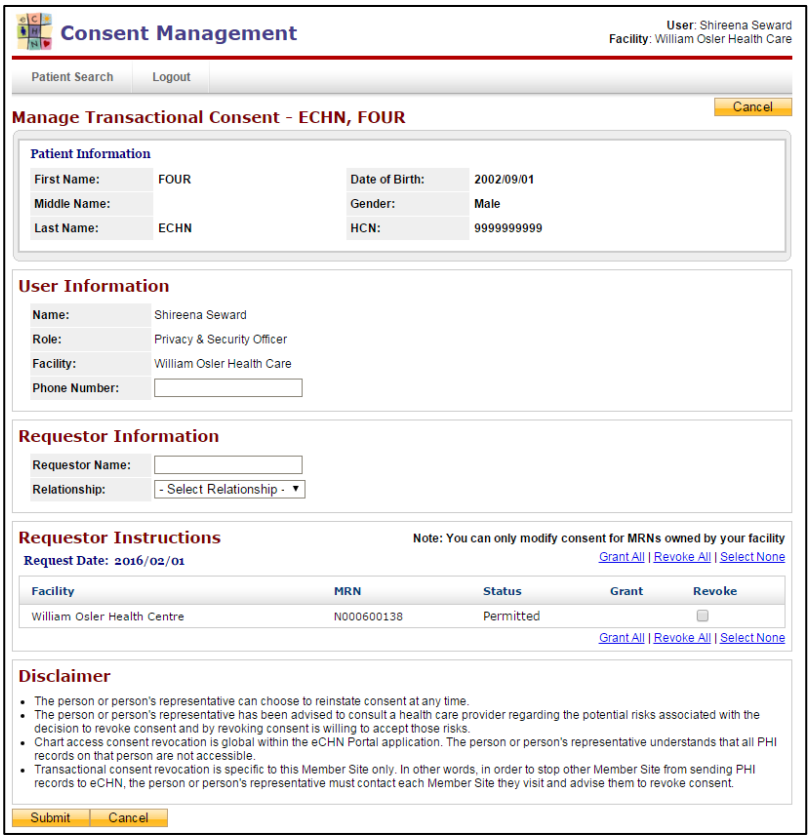
A "Transactional" consent restriction is when a patient withdraws their consent for the transmission of their PHI from a contributing client to eCHN and/or the posting of their patient data to WebChart. Once transactional consent blocks are put in place they take effect from that point-in-time forward, not retroactively. Data previously sent to eCHN for the relevant patient will still remain in eCHN. To block the patient data which was previously posted in eCHN, please follow instructions for access restrictions in sections 3.3 and/or 3.4 of this guide.

Many eCHN client organizations block the transmission of patient data themselves for those individuals that have withdrawn consent for its transfer to eCHN. In such cases, eCHN is not notified of the transactional consent restrictions applied at the client site. However, if transactional consent is managed by eCHN, the patient data for which consent is withdrawn/denied will be filtered by eCHN for the relevant patient. All filtered data is deleted by eCHN.

3.6.1 To apply a transactional consent restriction through the eCHN Consent Management application, first you must search and select the relevant patient. Please follow the instructions in sections 3.1 and 3.2 of this guide to learn how to login to the eCHN Portal, enter the Consent Management tool and select a patient.

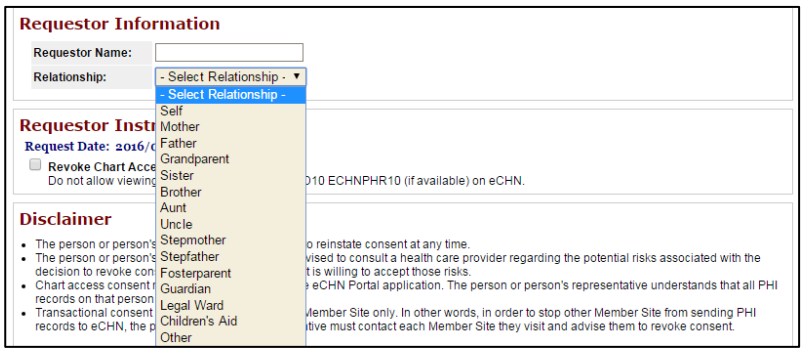
To process a transactional consent revocation request, select the yellow *Request Form* button.

3.6.2 The Manage Transactional Consent page will be displayed. All blank fields are mandatory and must be completed in order to submit the request.

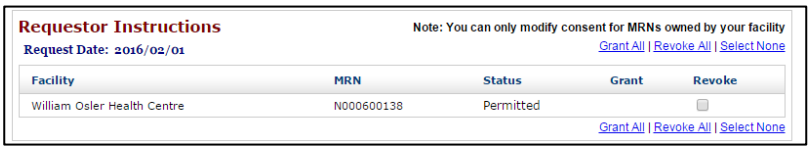



- The User Information section confirms the details of the authorized user (you) performing the requested consent directive. The "Phone Number" is required so eCHN may follow-up on any questions regarding the request.

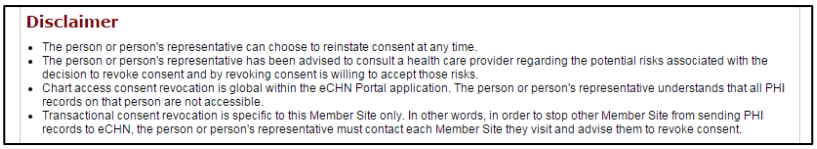
- The Requestor Information section allows the user to select details about the individual making the request for revocation/reinstatement of consent. Use the dropdown menu to choose the requestor's relationship to the patient.



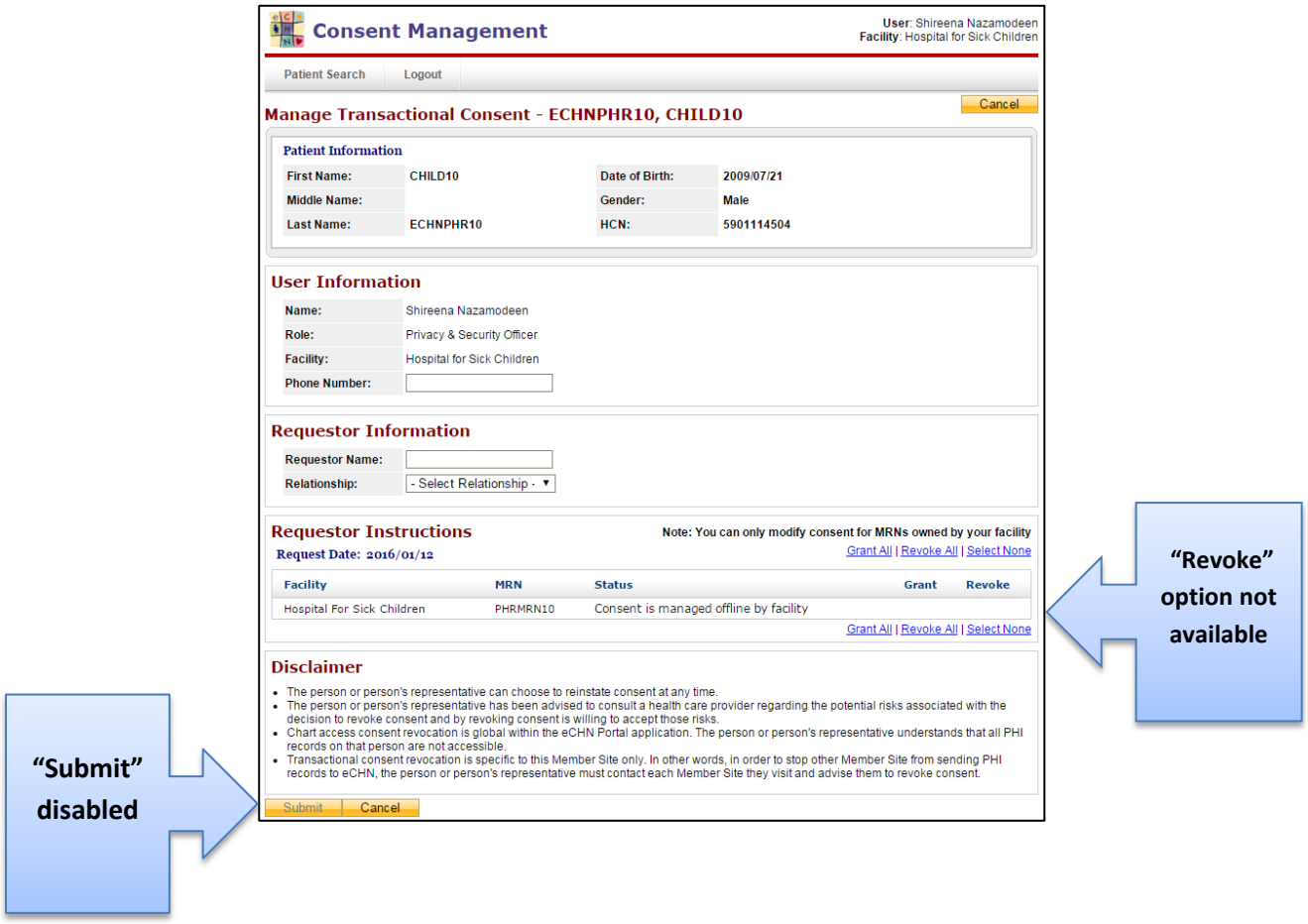

- The Requestor Instructions require the user to Grant or Revoke consent for the patient MRNs which belong to only your facility. The "Revoke" button is disabled for MRNs that do not belong to the user's facility. The user must click the relevant checkbox.



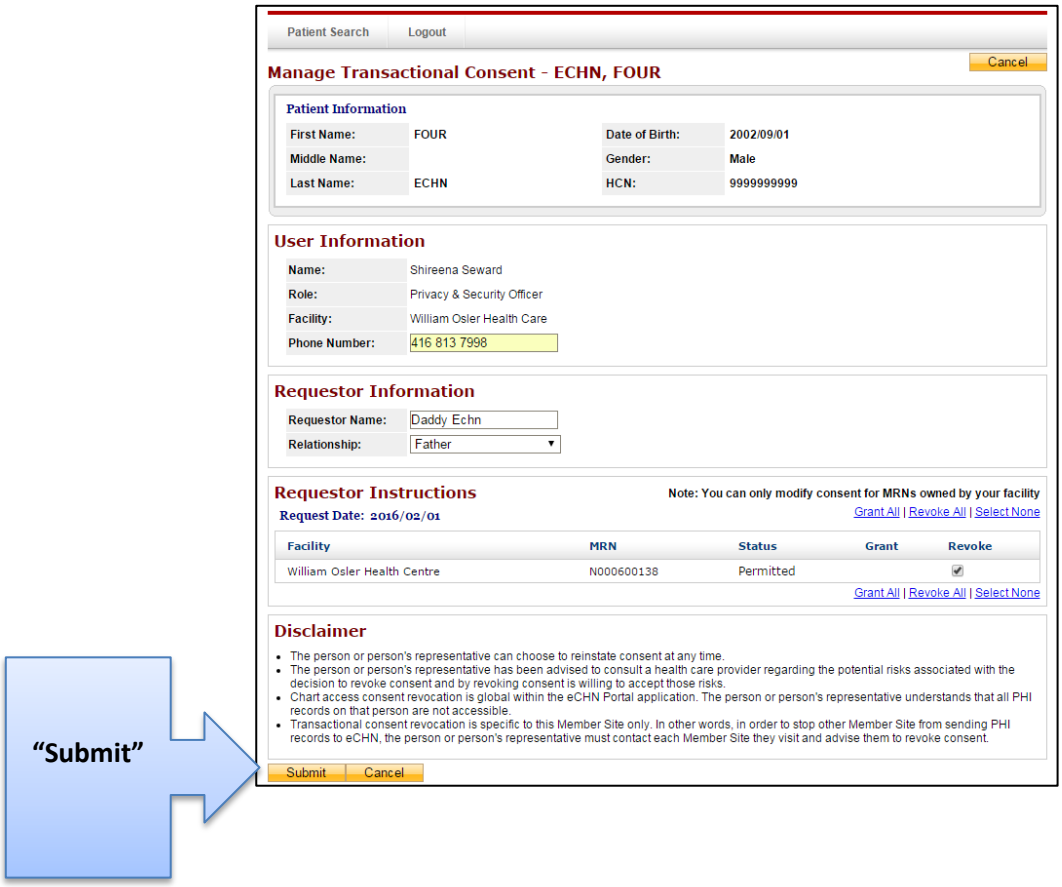

- The Disclaimer provides general information on the results of consent withdrawal for the transmission of patient data to eCHN.



Note: For clients that manage transactional consent at their own facility, there will be no "Revoke" consent option and the Yellow *Submi*t button will be disabled.

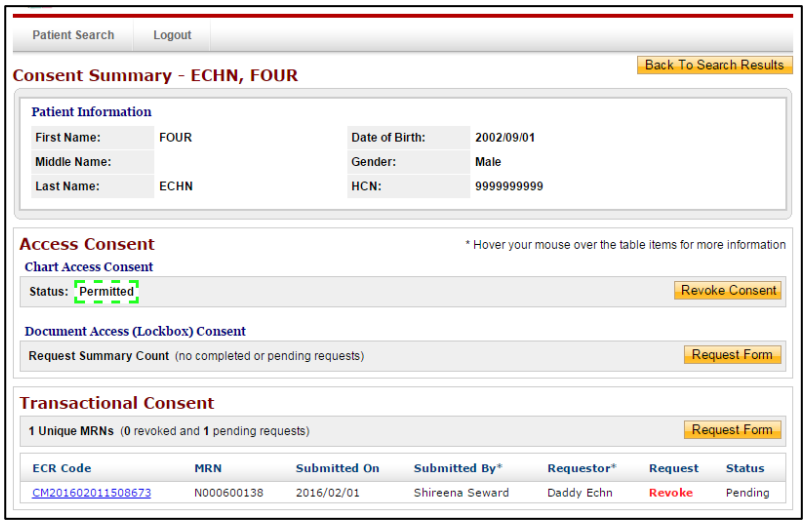


3.6.3 Once all the information has been entered and confirmed, select the yellow *Submit* button at the bottom of the page.



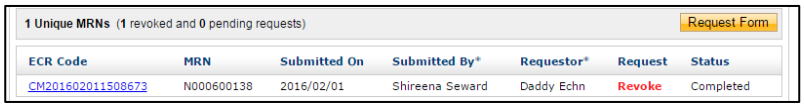
3.6.4 The 1 Unique MRNs now displays 0 revoked and 1 pending requests for the patient's Transactional Consent. This signifies that there is 1 request submitted by the user for processing by eCHN.

Note: An ECR Code is assigned to each consent change request, along with the date the request was submitted, the authorized eCHN user who entered the request, the name of the requestor, the type of request made (revoke or reinstate), and the status of the request.




3.6.5 To view the details of the submitted consent request, select the ECR code link. The request status and general information will be available for viewing by the user.

3.6.6 Once the request is processed by eCHN you will see 1 Unique MRNs change to 1 revoked and 0 pending requests. The status will be updated to Completed.



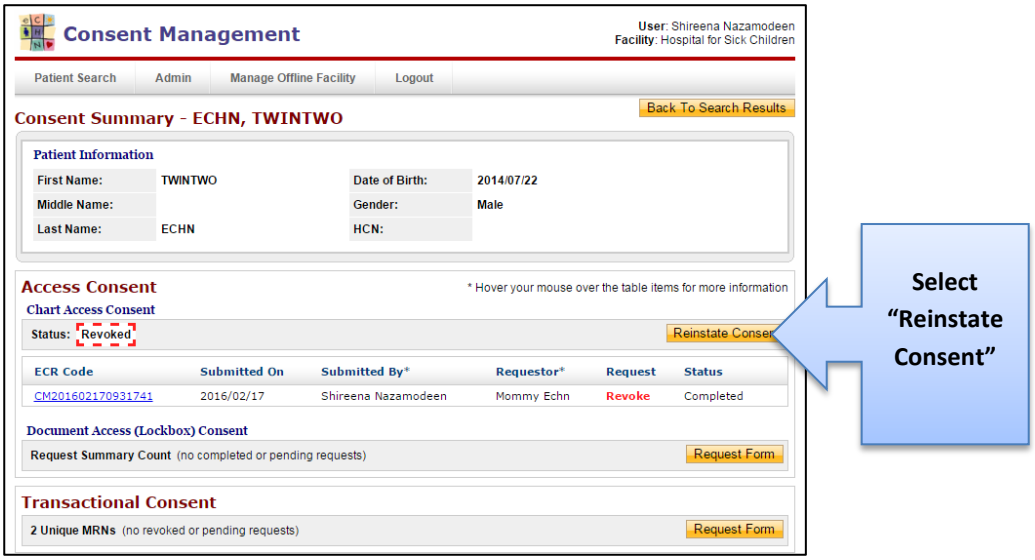
## 3.7 Reinstatement of Access and/or Transmission of Patient Data to eCHN

Patients may at any time reinstate "Access" or "Transactional" consent restrictions. The functionality exists in eCHN to reverse any previously applied access restrictions to a patients' full chart, or to specific records found within a patient chart, and to any transactional consent blocks of their PHI.

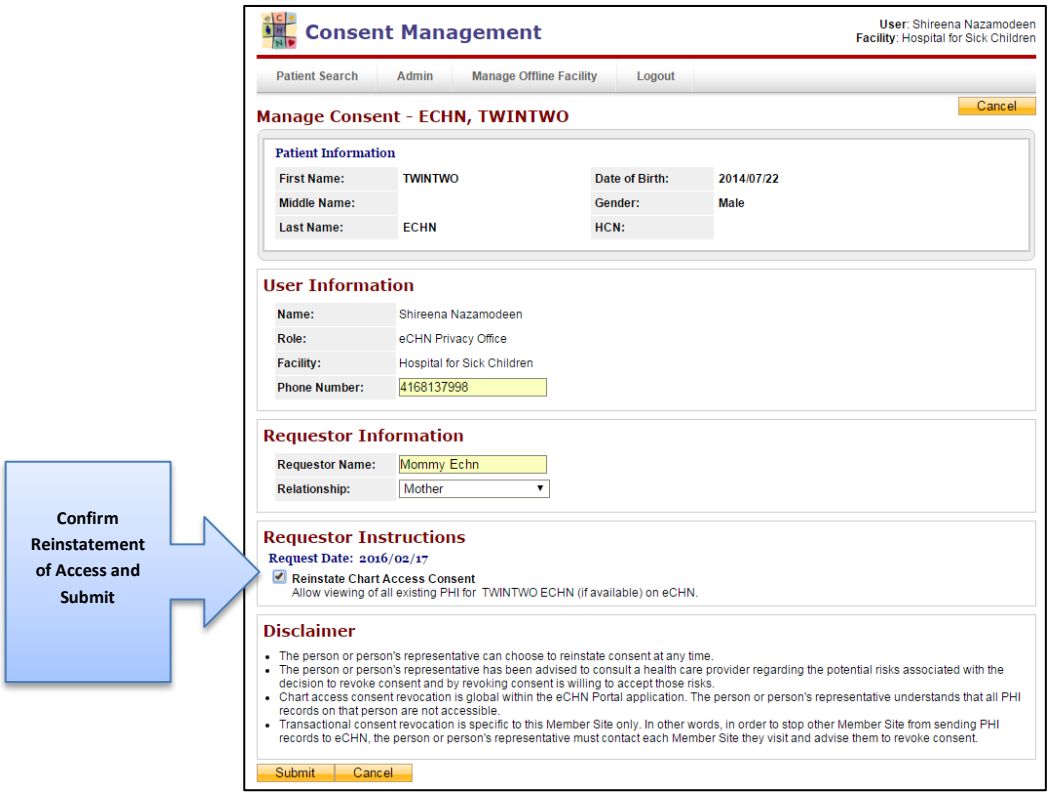
To apply an access consent reinstatement to a patient chart, first you must search and select the relevant patient. Please follow the instructions in sections 3.1 and 3.2 of this guide to learn how to login to the eCHN Portal, enter the Consent Management tool and select a patient.

### 3.7.1. Reinstating Chart Access Consent

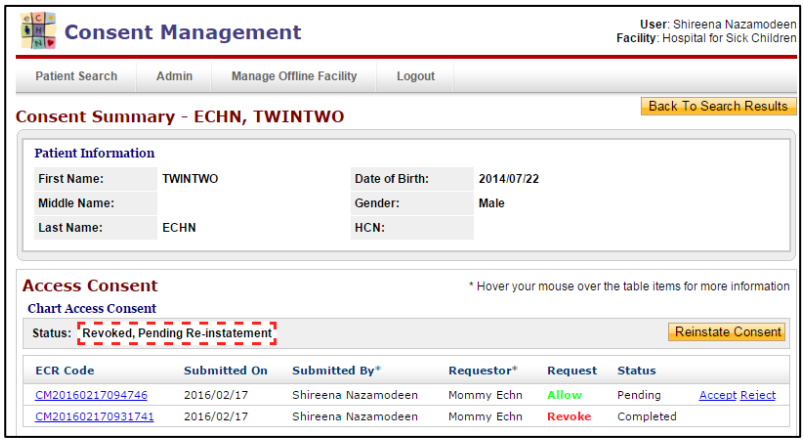
3.7.1.1. After a patient has been selected, request a Chart Access Consent reinstatement by choosing the yellow *Reinstate Consent* button.



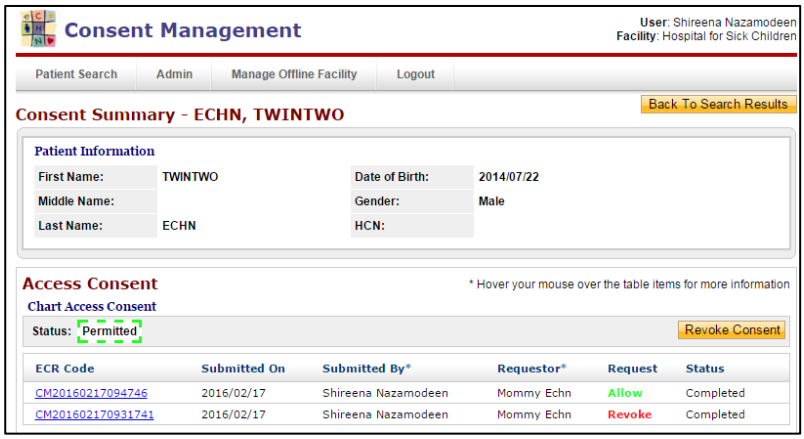
3.7.1.2. The Requestor Instructions require the user to click in the checkbox to confirm reinstatement of consent for the specific patient chart.




3.7.1.3. Once submitted, the Status (highlighted in red) will change to "Revoked, Pending Re-instatement", for this specific patient's Chart Access Consent.

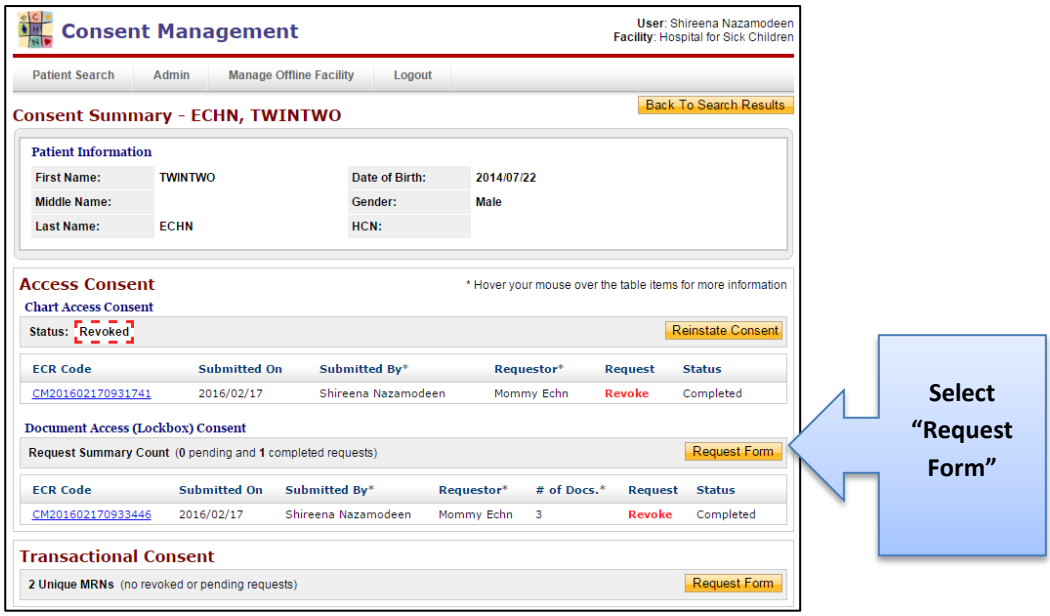


3.7.1.4. Once the consent request is processed by the eCHN Privacy Office, you will see the Status (highlighted in green) change to “Permitted”.



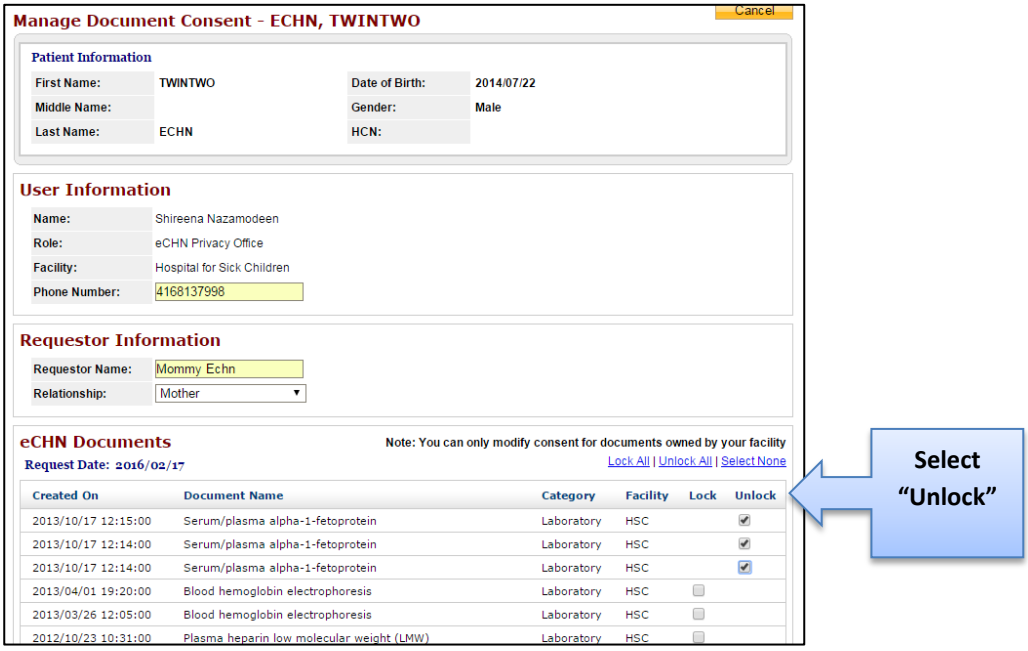

## 3.7.2. Reinstating Document Access (Lockbox) Consent

3.7.2.1. After a patient has been selected, request a Document Access (Lockbox) Consent reinstatement by choosing the yellow *Request Form* button.



3.7.2.2. If there are records in eCHN for the selected patient, a request to unlock one or more records can be submitted by selecting the record (click the associated checkbox). To unlock a record, select the checkbox in the "Unlock" column.

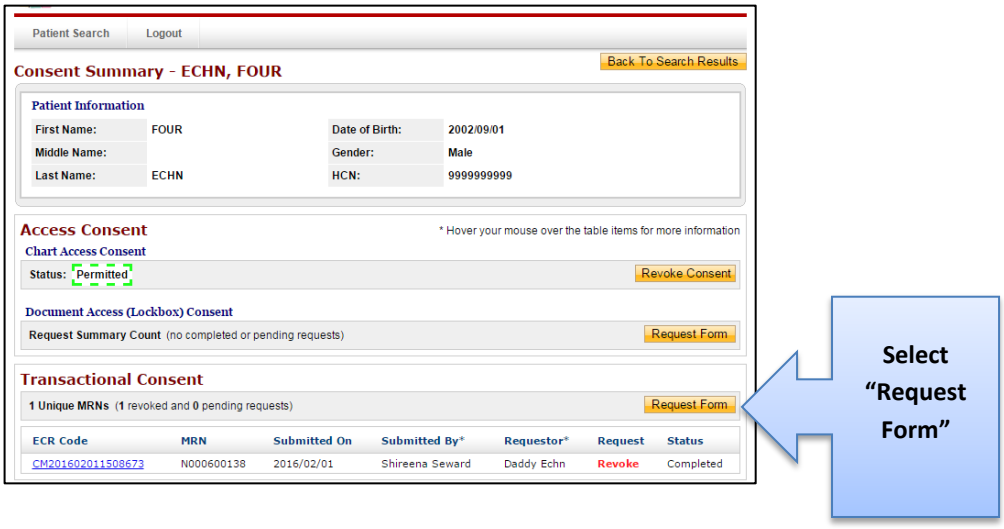
Note: You will only be provided with a list of records from your facility.



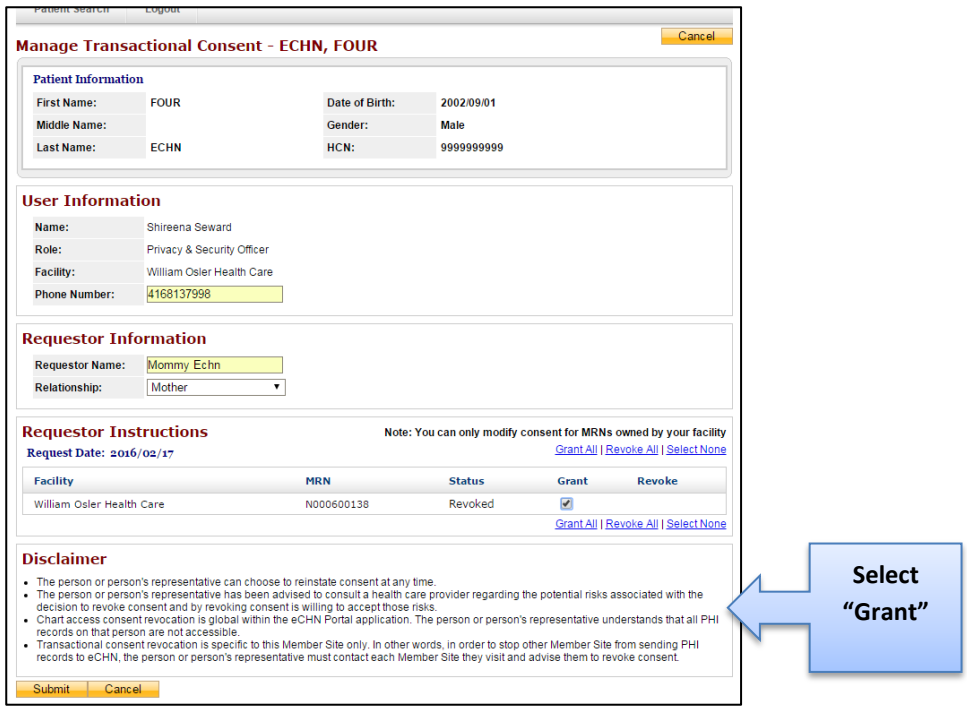

3.7.2.3. Please follow sections 3.4.2 – 3.4.6 of this guide to complete and submit the consent request form.

### 3.7.3. Reinstating Transactional Consent

3.7.3.1. To process a Transactional Consent reinstatement, select the yellow *Request Form* button.




3.7.3.2. The Requestor Instructions require the user to grant consent for the patient MRN which belongs to only your facility. The *Grant* button is disabled for MRNs that do not belong to the user's facility. The user must click the relevant checkbox.




3.7.3.3. Please follow the instructions in sections 3.6.3 – 3.6.6 of this guide to complete and submit the consent request form.