



College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia

Professional Guideline

Data Stewardship Framework

Effective:	August 22, 2007
Last revised:	September 2009
Version:	2.0
Next review:	September 2019
Related topic(s):	Medical Records , Photographic, Video and Audio Recording of Patients

A **professional guideline** reflects a recommended course of action established based on the values, principles and duties of the medical profession. Physicians may exercise reasonable discretion in their decision-making based on the guidance provided.

Registrants may seek advice on these issues by contacting the College and asking to speak with a member of the registrar staff, or by seeking medical legal advice from the CMPA.

PREAMBLE

This document is a professional guideline of the Board of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia.

COLLEGE'S POSITION

The historical model and practice of managing confidential patient information is changing dramatically as a result of advances in information technology, including the implementation of electronic medical records (EMR) and the concept of an electronic health record (EHR). However, the requirement for a physician to protect the integrity of a patient's medical information remains an unchanged professional obligation.

In November 2006, the Council of the College appointed an ad hoc committee on Privacy and Data Stewardship in response to a number of diverse information management issues surrounding medical records. The document was developed with the support of the [College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta](#), and reviewed by the [Canadian Medical Protective Association](#). Council endorsed the framework in May 2007.

The framework in its current format is intended as a reference guide for physicians as they contemplate a shift from paper to electronic data storage in their practice. The principles outlined within reinforce the need for compliance with professional standards. It is also intended for ehealth planners and vendors who must consider the safety and integrity of personal health information as their top priority.

The document, while comprehensive, does not address all of the transition issues associated with ehealth. Further consideration will be given to privacy issues, patient concerns and consent, disclosure, and the secondary use of shared data. Specific and relevant components of the content will be communicated more succinctly to physicians over the coming months.

For more information on the Data Stewardship Framework, go to:

- [Data Stewardship Framework Version 2.4 - August 22, 2007](#)
- [Definitions - February 22, 2008](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions - February 22, 2008](#)
- [References - February 22, 2008](#)
- [Key Steps for Physicians in Responding to Privacy Breaches](#)