

POSITION STATEMENT

PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY



NSCMIRTP POSITION

The NSCMIRTP recognizes and supports the patient's right to privacy of personal health information and believes that protection of privacy and confidentiality is essential to patient care and professional practice. Furthermore, the NSCMIRTP supports legislation, policies and standards that protect patient health information.

BACKGROUND AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Developments in technology have changed the style of delivery of health care and the systems which are used to record and share patient information, which can increase the risk for a breach of patient privacy or confidentiality. For these reasons, the NSCMIRTP recommends that Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Professionals (MIRTPs) must be aware of all provincial and national regulations surrounding patient privacy and confidentiality, and be knowledgeable on how to protect their patients' rights. As personal health information is required for accurate treatment, diagnosis and care, these health professionals should also be aware that health information shall only be used with the consent of the individual.

Nova Scotia's provincial privacy legislation, the Personal Health Information Act (PHIA), came into force on June 1, 2013. PHIA governs the collection, use, disclosure, retention, disposal and destruction of personal health information. The goal of this legislation is to balance the privacy rights of individuals with respect to their health information and the need for "custodians" to use and disclose personal health information, to facilitate high quality patient care.

MIRTPs, all have an obligation under PHIA to protect the confidentiality of all professionally acquired information. These professionals will be held accountable to understand and comply with PHIA regulations.

In addition, the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct put forth by such national professional regulatory bodies as Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists (CAMRT) and Sonography Canada, also help to protect patient confidentiality. This includes; making every effort to ensure the physical privacy of the patient, respecting the patient's right to privacy of personal information and ensuring confidentiality of the patient's health information and documentation.

The privacy of patient personal health information is a shared responsibility between all health professionals. Ensuring the integrity of the health information protection is vital to the relationships between healthcare providers and patients.

REFERENCES

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