



Protection of Healthcare Information

Definition

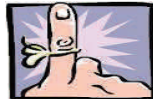
Data Protection is the safeguarding of the privacy rights of individuals in relation to the processing of personal data.

Eight rules of Data Protection

1. Obtain and process information fairly
2. Keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purposes
3. Use and disclose it only in ways compatible with these purposes
4. Keep it safe and secure
5. Keep it accurate, complete and up-to-date
6. Ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive
7. Retain it for no longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes it was obtained
8. Give a copy of his/her personal data to that individual on request



Service users have a right to expect that those working in the HSE keep these personal documents confidential and secure.



Remember

- When using a computer/laptop:
 - use strong and effective passwords that are not easily guessed and keep them confidential
 - under no circumstances should a password be shared
 - always lock your computer by logging out when you have to leave it unattended
 - be aware that unencrypted email is not a secure method of communication
 - exercise caution when downloading files from the internet.
 - if changing your computer make sure that all confidential and sensitive data is permanently deleted. This should be undertaken in consultation with ICT. This information must be overwritten using special sanitation software which is available from the ICT Directorate.
 - if personal sensitive information must be sent by email this must always be encrypted
- All healthcare records must be stored in a secure/supervised area with restricted access and must be returned to their designated storage location when not in use. Staff are bound organisationally and professionally to protect the confidentiality of service user information at all times.
- Care should be taken to ensure that a patient's healthcare record is not placed in any public place or where it may be viewed or accessed inappropriately.
- Healthcare records should not be placed on reception desks or on trolleys except when they are required for clinics and only then under the supervision of appropriate clinic staff.
- Healthcare records should not be left on desks in offices in the absence of the responsible staff. Whenever an office is left unattended it should be securely locked. Such records are strictly confidential and shouldn't be divulged or discussed unless acting on instructions of an authorised officer.

- Staff should be reminded of the importance of confidentiality and security of patient healthcare information at staff meetings.
- Staff should not remove confidential service user information from the workplace unless necessary e.g. domiciliary visits; if being carried in a car records should be kept out of sight and not left overnight.
- Data Protection Breaches in service users/staff information must be reported to your line manager. All staff must comply with the Data Protection Breach Management Policy and Procedure. The Data Protection Breach form must be completed and forwarded to the HSE Consumer Affairs Area Office and, where the breach involves ICT/computer mobile devices/equipment, it must also be copied to the ICT Directorate.
- All staff must appraise themselves fully of the Information Security Policy which is available on the Intranet: http://hsenet.hse.ie/HSE_Central/Commercial_and_Support_Services/ICT/Policies_and_Procedures/Policies/ and HSE Guidance documents:
 1. Data Protection is Everyone's Responsibility - An Introductory Guide for Health Service Staff
 2. Data Protection and Freedom of Information Legislation - Guidance for Health Service Staff
 3. Records Retention Periods 2013 - Health Service Policy 2013
- All staff **must** complete the Data Protection Confirmation Form attached to document: *Data Protection is Everyone's Responsibility* and return to their line manager.

Contacts for further information:

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