



E: DHCIG@gov.scot

Dear Colleagues

RECORDS MANAGEMENT CODE OF PRACTICE FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

1. This letter advises all NHS Boards that a new version of the Records Management Code of Practice has been published and is effective as of 30 August.
2. The Code of Practice has undergone a comprehensive review and has been updated to reflect current best practice, service requirements and changes to the legislative landscape which impacts on NHS Boards across Scotland. There have been significant changes made throughout the document, including the addition of several new sub sections, however the Boards attention is drawn to:
 - Clarity around the management and retention of employee records to simplify the approach.
 - Streamlining of the retention periods for core and specialty adult health records with the inclusion of new retention periods for these records in digital format to meet the needs of clinicians, the expectation of patients and simplify the application of retention periods to digital systems.
 - Changes to the retention of children's health records which now require to be retained until the 25th birthday of the child whether they are living or deceased.
 - Changes to the retention of GP Patient Health Records which now require to be retained until 10 years after deregistration from the practice or after death, whichever is sooner.
3. The new Code of Practice can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781836015444>

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Addressees

For action
NHS Chief Executives
Health Records Managers
Corporate Records
Managers

For information
Senior Information Risk
Officers
Caldicott Guardians
Information Governance
Leads
Data Protection Officers
Freedom of Information
Leads
Digital Leads
Primary Care Contractors

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Background

4. The Records Management Code of Practice for Health and Social Care is a guide to the required standards of practice in the management of data, information and records for those who work within or under contract to NHS organisations in Scotland.
5. It is based on current legal requirements and professional best practice and aims to harmonise the management of data, information, and records across organisations in order to promote consistency of approach and support the 'Once for Scotland' ethos.
6. Ensuring that records are appropriately managed can:
 - increase efficiency and effectiveness, delivering savings in administration costs;
 - minimise unnecessary physical or digital information storage costs;
 - support decision making;
 - enhance, improve and develop service delivery;
 - support the achievement of business objectives and targets;
 - ensure compliance with legislation, regulations and standards;
 - support transparency;
 - underpin business resilience.
7. Please note that this supersedes the following versions:
 - Scottish Government Records Management: Health and Social Care Code of Practice (Scotland) 2020 (Version 3.0)

Action

8. Chief Executives are asked to ensure that all appropriate staff are aware of and follow the revised code of practice. The necessary arrangements should be made to ensure that all local records management / information governance policies, guidelines and procedures are updated to reflect the new content where appropriate. We also ask that steps are taken to inform primary care contractors about the contents of this letter.

Yours sincerely



Richard McCallum,
Director of Health and Social Care Finance, Digital and Governance
Scottish Government