

CEL 31 (2010)

27 August 2010

Dear Colleague

RECORDS MANAGEMENT: NHS CODE OF PRACTICE (SCOTLAND)

Summary

1. This letter provides NHS Boards and special Health Boards with a revised Records Management Code of Practice. The code has been revised in light of feedback received from Boards and the issues raised by recent records management incidents. The main changes are:
 - more detailed description of accountability, roles and responsibilities
 - expansion of section on 'Storage, Archiving and Scanning'
 - re-draft of 'Appraisal of Records' section
 - references and links to published guidance and good practice documents.
2. This letter supercedes the following circulars:
 - [HDL \(2006\) 28](#) – The Management, Retention and Disposal of Administrative Records
 - [CEL 28 \(2008\)](#) – Records Management: NHS Code of Practice (Scotland)
3. The code of practice integrates for the first time the minimum retention schedules for both health and administrative records. The minimum retention schedules remain unchanged except for pathology and pharmacy records which have been updated in line with revised guidance from the Royal College of Pathologists, Institute of Biomedical Science and Royal Pharmaceutical Society.
4. The code is supplemented by seven records management guidance notes, which are intended to provide practical guidance for those working at an operational level within Boards.
5. The Code of Practice can be accessed at the following link:
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/04/20142935/0>

The seven records management Guidance Notes are available at the following link:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/04/NHS-record-management>

Addresses

For action

Chief Executives
Health Records
Managers
Corporate Records
Managers

For information

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Finance Directors
Information
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eHealth website :
<http://www.ehealth.scot.nhs.uk>

Background

6. The *Records Management: NHS Code of Practice* is based on current legal requirements and professional best practice and aims to:
- establish, as part of the wider information governance framework, records management best practice in relation to the creation, use, storage, management and disposal of NHS records;
 - provide information on the general legal obligations that apply to NHS records;
 - set out recommendations for best practice to assist in fulfilling these obligations, for example adhering to the national Information Governance Standards;
 - explain the requirement to select records for permanent preservation;
 - set out recommended minimum periods for retention of NHS personal health and administrative records regardless of the media on which they are held, and indicate where further information on records management may be found.

Action

6. 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 inform primary care contractors about the contents of this letter.

Yours sincerely



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Director of Healthcare Policy and Strategy