

FACT SHEET FOR PATIENTS

The Use of Computer Technology in Your Care

The use of computer and information technology to support an electronic health record (EHR) is quickly becoming a standard practice in health care. For health care team members, the use of computer technology provides quick access to important information about your health or illness. For you, it means no longer having to repeat your health information multiple times as you receive care. However, clinicians will still ask you to validate information that has been collected previously, such as your Allergy information. This fact sheet answers questions you may have about the use of computers and other computer technology by healthcare team members. The development and implementation of the electronic health record is at various stages across the system, so you may still see health care team members documenting in your paper health record.

How do computers and related information technology help health care providers provide quality care?

- Computers enable health care team members to quickly access important information about your health or illness and your treatment plan from your electronic health record.
- Health care team members can access information such as your laboratory test and x-ray results and health reports from other health care team members to give you the best care possible.
- Health care team members can record your health information, treatments and progress for ready access and use by other health team members.
- Health care team members may use the computer to search drug databases, libraries and best practice resources to obtain important information related to your diagnosis and care or find health education information for you.

What types of computers and information technology do health care team members use?

- Health care team members use computers similar to those that you use at home or at work. They use software programs specifically designed to support the work of health care team members.
- Health care team members may also use a smart phone and/or tablet.

How do health care team members use computers when they are busy with patients/clients?

- Health care organizations may have a variety of computer devices in use – some located at the reception desk or nursing station; others may be hand

held, on a cart or mounted on walls throughout the organization.

Is my personal and health information private and confidential on a computer?

- Yes! Health care organizations and health care workers must follow very strict rules and regulations to ensure the computer system is safe and secure and that only those individuals with permission to view your health information have access to your record.
- Various users are authorized through secure passwords to access only those areas of your information they require to do their work.

What kind of information do health care team members enter on the computer?

- Health care team members enter the same type of health care information and observations that were previously written in the paper chart including treatments and the results.
- Health care team members enter details such as your blood pressure, temperature, effects of medication and treatments, and notes about how you are feeling to ensure the health care team has your complete information.
- Health care team members will also note your personal preferences on your health care plan that all team members use to make informed decisions about your care and treatment.

To safeguard patient information The Saskatchewan Health Authority has the ability to track the provider who accessed your records and the time and date the information was viewed. Routine audits are performed by the Privacy and Access Department. Patients have the ability to request an audit of their electronic health record. If you would like to request an audit of your health record please contact the Privacy and Access Department at 306-655-7679.

Computer systems in health care increase the quality, safety, and consistency of patient care by providing health care providers with quick and easy access to clinical information related to your health. These systems provide information and resources on best clinical practice and are a tool to quickly enter and share observations and information with all members of the health care team.

Adopted from:

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