

Media Release

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Subject: COACH: Manitoba signs on for province-wide use of Privacy Guidelines

Canada has moved another step closer to the broad and consistent application of best practices in the collection, use and disclosure of sensitive personal health information through a new three-year agreement between COACH and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and Manitoba eHealth. This agreement enables the use and distribution of the COACH Guidelines for the Protection of Health Information across the entire Manitoba provincial healthcare system.

The agreement, finalized at the end of March, provides Manitoba with province-wide use of the Guidelines for public and private sector healthcare organizations. Similar agreements were set up between COACH and the Alberta and Saskatchewan health ministries in 2007.

The Guidelines document is a practical, easy-to-use electronic resource for minimizing risk, maximizing integrity and protecting the privacy of sensitive personal health information. Aligned with national and international standards, principles-based, focused on health care practices, and broadly applicable, the latest 182-page edition was published in January 2008.

"The Guidelines thoroughly support our privacy and security requirements," said Wilma Arsenault, Divisional Director of Government Relations and Business Office for Manitoba eHealth. "This tool is essential in bringing privacy and security consistency and best practices to many of Manitoba's eHealth initiatives. This is especially relevant as the Electronic Health Record (EHR) is beginning to be established across Manitoba."

"The EHR is a major factor in COACH's desire to make a pan-Canadian set of Guidelines fully relevant, up-to-date and aligned with Canada Health Infoway and international standards," commented COACH CEO Don Newsham. "There is an urgent need for easy-to-use and immediately applicable tools for protecting the confidentiality and integrity of personal health information while simultaneously enabling healthcare professionals to access the information they need to provide appropriate and safe care to Canadians everywhere."

More information

The Guidelines are available to all jurisdictions under a license agreement with COACH that provides a subscription to the content and annual updates as part of the multi-year agreement. The Guidelines are also available at single and discount rates. For more, including a copy of the Preface and Table of Contents, visit www.coachorg.com.