

WELSH HEALTH CIRCULAR



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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CATEGORY: INFORMATION GOVERNANCE

Title: Seventh Caldicott principle: "Duty to Share" and people's access to their electronic care records

Date of Expiry / Review: N/A

For Action by:
Caldicott Guardians

Action required by:
7 May 2015

Sender: Andrew Goodall

DHSS Welsh Government Contact(s) :
Sally Greenway, Digital Health and Care Team, Department for Health and Social Services, Welsh Government

Enclosure(s): None

Dear Colleague,

Seventh Caldicott principle: “Duty to Share” and people’s access to their electronic care records

As you are well aware, Dame Fiona Caldicott chaired a review in 1996 – 97 on the use of patient-identifiable data. Her committee recommended six principles for the protection of people’s confidentiality which became known as the Caldicott principles.

In 2012, Dame Fiona established a small panel of expert members to undertake an information governance review which aimed to ensure that there was an appropriate balance between the protection of the patient or user’s information and the use and sharing of such information to improve care.

The review recognised that data sharing is vital for patient safety, quality and integrated care. In the March 2013 report from the expert panel it concluded that a re-balancing of sharing and protecting information was urgently needed in the patients’ and service users’ interests. This resulted in a seventh principle being added, namely:

“The duty to share information can be as important as the duty to protect patient confidentiality:
Health and social care professionals should have the confidence to share information in the best interests of their patients within the framework set out by these principles. They should be supported by the policies of their employers, regulators and professional bodies.”

As Caldicott Guardians I am sure you will have taken steps to introduce this principle in your organisation. I am therefore writing today to ask for a short report from you on what actions you have taken and results you have achieved in translating this principle into action.

I would appreciate the report having sections on:

- the actions taken to communicate the new principle to all staff in the organisation
- specific changes in practice that have been observed as a result
- initiatives that are being taken forward
- general comments of relevance to the new principle

Also relevant to sharing information in the best interests of patients is the extant legislation and guidance on patients accessing records about their care. It is important that patients know they are entitled to have access to their health records and that any barrier which limits active patient participation in their care and wellbeing is avoided.

Queries concerning the report should be addressed to Sally Greenway, Head of Information Standards and Governance at:

Digital Health & Care
4th Floor

Department of Health & Social Services
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ
E mail: DHSS-DigitalHealthandCare@Wales.GSI.Gov.UK.

Please send your report to Sally Greenway by 9 May 2015.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Goodall', written in a cursive style.

Andrew Goodall
Director General, Department for Health and Social Services / Chief Executive
NHS Wales