

Emails and the law 25

Sending patient records by email is not necessarily prohibited, but it must be done in accordance with the requirements of Law 25 on the protection of personal information in Quebec. Here are some best practices to follow when emailing patient records to ensure compliance with the law:

- **Obtaining informed consent:** Before sending personal information by email, be sure to obtain informed consent from the patient for this method of transmission. The patient must be informed of the risks associated with sending by email and give their consent.
- **Encryption and security:** Use appropriate security measures to encrypt emails containing personal information. Encryption helps protect data during transmission.
- **Secure logins and passwords:** Use secure logins and passwords to access email accounts used for sending sensitive data. Double authentication is also an asset to account security. Make sure only authorized people have access to these accounts.
- **Recipient Authentication:** Verify the identity of recipients before sending sensitive data. Avoid sending confidential information to an unverified email address.
- **Limiting recipients:** Limit the number of people who have access to email containing sensitive data. Only send them to people who need access to them.
- **Send tracking:** Set up a tracking system to know when emails were sent and viewed. This can be useful for documenting compliance when needed.

- **Email management:** Ensure that emails containing sensitive data do not remain in the recipient's inbox after being read. Encourage recipients to delete sensitive emails as soon as they become aware of them.
- **Staff Training:** Train dental clinic staff on the correct way to send sensitive data via email and best practices for protecting personal information.
- **Internal Policies and Procedures:** Establish clear internal policies and procedures regarding sending data by email and ensure all staff understand and follow them.

It is important to note that Law 25 requires that personal information be adequately protected, whether it is stored, transmitted or processed electronically or otherwise. Therefore, if appropriate measures are put in place to secure emails containing sensitive data, sending patient records by email may be compliant with the law. However, it is essential to take adequate security measures to protect patient privacy.

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