

## Protecting Patient Health Information in Electronic Records

### **Policy Issue**

The proportion of optometrists using electronic health records is growing. Electronic records offer advantages in accessing and storing patient health information, and have the potential to improve the management of patient care. Optometrists are responsible for ensuring their patients' health information — whether in paper or electronic form — is stored and maintained in a secure manner, in keeping with legal requirements, and according to relevant policies from provincial and territorial regulatory authorities.

### **Policy Position**

As is the case for paper-based records, optometrists are responsible for ensuring their patients' electronic records are maintained and stored securely. Measures to restrict access, prevent loss and theft, and maintain the privacy of patients' personal health information are important.

Optometrists should follow their provincial regulatory authority's policies or guidelines and any relevant legislation pertaining to protecting patient health information.

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