

## **PURPOSE**

To ensure that patient/client health and social services information is kept confidential and secure thereby ensuring system accountability.

## **PRINCIPLES**

1. Follow established guidelines that are proven to reduce risk;
2. Reduce unnecessary faxing and look at re-engineering systems and options for better solutions;
3. Increase awareness on individual and system accountability for the security of health information.

## **SCOPE**

These guidelines pertain to all faxes containing confidential patient/client information.

## **DEFINITIONS**

For the purposes of these guidelines:

Urgent – urgent means when there is need for information which is immediately necessary for the continuity of care and there are no other means of transmitting the information in a secure or timely manner.

Audit – A random selection of pre-programmed numbers totalling a minimum of 20% of the total numbers in the Health and Social Services Authority (HSSA) fax system must be audited on a quarterly basis in accordance with the schedule established by the Department (attached).

## **PROVISIONS**

1. Audited pre-programmed fax numbers must be used; doing so will reduce the possibility of misdialing a number.

2. The HSSAs must maintain a detailed log of all faxes sent which contain client information.
3. Always complete a fax cover sheet, clearly identifying both sender and intended receiver. The cover sheet should include a warning that the information is private and confidential and that you should be notified immediately if the information is received in error. An example is attached for your use.
4. Perform regular audits of pre-programmed fax numbers per Appendix A to make sure that the numbers entered are correct and up to date.

## **EXCEPTIONS**

In exceptional cases, pre-programmed/audited fax numbers may not be available. If so, the following provisions apply:

1. When faxing urgent faxes to a non pre-programmed fax number is necessary, phone ahead to let the recipient know that a fax is coming and to confirm the fax number.
2. Any urgent faxes that are not pre-programmed require 2 people to review and document, similar to narcotic count processes, and these are to be logged separately and monitored.
3. Call the recipient to verify that he or she received the complete transmission; or check the confirmation sheet to see that it went through to the correct number.

## **AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Chief Executive Officers of all HSSAs are responsible to administer and ensure compliance with these guidelines.

In order to ensure compliance, the Chief Executive Officers will:

- Standard signage must be posted at all fax machines outlining these guidelines;
- Stress the importance of client confidentiality to all staff on a regular basis;
- Include these guidelines as part of the ongoing staff training/orientation;
- Monitor that the two person fax protocol, when required, is followed;
- Perform audits of pre-programmed fax numbers as defined;
- Maintain a system standardized log of all faxes and audits; and
- Designate a specific individual to pre-program fax numbers or to change fax numbers already pre-programmed into the system.

Approved by:

Original Signed

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Deputy Minister  
Health and Social Services

Effective Date: June 22, 2010

**Standard Fax Cover Sheet and Privacy Disclaimer**

facsimile transmittal -Confidential

[Health and Social Services Authority Contact Information]

To: [Name]

Fax: [fax number]

From: [Name]

Date: 7/12/2010

Re: [subject of fax]

Pages: [number of pages]

Cc: [Name]

Urgent     For review     Please

Please

Please recycle

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**QUARTERLY AUDIT SCHEDULE**

**Beaufort Delta Health and Social Services Authority**

- *First week January, April, July, October*

**Deh Cho Health and Social Services Authority**

- *Second week January, April, July, October*

**Fort Smith Health and Social Services Authority**

- *First week February, May, August, November*

**Hay River Health and Social Services Authority**

- *Second week February, May, August, September*

**Sahtu Health and Social Services Authority**

- *First week March, June, September, December*

**Stanton Territorial Health Authority**

- *Second week March, June, September, December*

**Tlicho Community Services Agency**

- *Last week January, April, July, October*

**Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority**

- *Last week February, May, August, November*