BUSINESS PATHWAYS

Key Roles in Disaster Response and Business Continuity Planning

Consider the following when establishing and assigning key roles for your practice.

Impact on business operations:

- Patient safety and continuity of care.
- Timeline for recovery and maximum amount of loss that can be incurred before complete loss of business.
- Timeline for practice operations if a critical person is unavailable or only partially available.

Resources that have been compromised:

- Minimum required staff to operate the business.
- Computer and medical equipment requirements.
- Access to secured areas and required communication systems.
- Alternate banking service and billing processes.

Damage mitigation actions to consider:

- Hours of operation and temporary employees or staff from other clinics.
- Referring patients elsewhere and alternative methods for notifying staff and patients of a disruption or closure.
- Entry or re-entry of data once systems are available.
- Budget to develop the recovery strategy, resources available after an adverse event, and access to funding during recovery.
- Back-up facilities options (i.e., arrangements with another practice).

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Potential roles for your staff

Business Continuity Plan Coordinator

Typically assigned to a lead physician or practice/office manager, with a backup assigned in case the lead is unavailable or indisposed.

Responsibilities:

- Determine how threats can be eliminated or mitigated and develop plans to recover from damage caused by specific threats.
- Hold the master copy of the plan and coordinate all updates, and retain an offsite copy.
- Review and update the plan on an annual basis including periodic tests.
- Initiate the plan and coordinate its implementation when an adverse event occurs.
- Train staff so they can fulfil their role(s) in the plan when it is implemented.
- Collect contact information for staff, building manager, suppliers, and insurance and restoration companies.
- Approve interim expenses such as new purchases, payroll and ongoing expenses.
- Accept overall responsibility for re-establishing normal operations.

Clinic Communications Coordinator

Primary communications conduit for the clinic, supporting the clinic BCP coordinator.

Responsibilities:

- Retains an offsite copy of the Business Continuity Plan.
- Maintains contact with staff.
- Initiates contact with the EMR vendor. (This responsibility may be delegated to EMR Vendor BCP Coordinator or Clinic EMR Liaison.)
- Maintains contact with the local Health Authority, Doctors of BC, and others as required.
- Contacts patients, vendors, and suppliers.

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EMR Vendor BCP Coordinator

Works with the clinic to re-establish access to the EMR and patient data, both in the short term during immediate recovery and long term should the physical clinic environment need to be re-established. This role may be combined with Clinic EMR Liaison role.

Responsibilities:

- Obtains new equipment for the clinic.
- Facilitates reconnection to the Internet and the vendor data center.
- Facilitates data recovery if required.
- Assists with establishment of temporary facilities if required.
- Facilitates EMR setup in the clinic including re-establishing roles and permissions, configuration and resetting preferences.
- Tests the environment before implementation.

Clinic EMR Liaison

Representative who can act as the primary liaison with the EMR vendor to support the clinic BCP coordinator. This role may be combined with EMR Vendor BCP Coordinator role.

Responsibilities:

- Retains an offsite copy of the Business Continuity Plan.
- Provides access to facilities for the EMR provider.
- Works with the vendor during EMR setup.
- Identifies training requirements for replacement personnel.
- Assists with pre-implementation testing.
- Assures verification of data recovery.

Evacuation Warden

Responsibilities:

- Assist others in case of an evacuation.
- Account for employees after evacuation.
- Retrieve emergency kits.

This document references resources from the Divisions of Family Practice, the Alberta Medical Association, and WorkSafeBC.

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