CLINIC IT SUPPORT SELECTION CHECKLIST

Summary

This document offers a checklist of guiding questions to help select local information technology (IT) support for a private practice clinic. First, prepare for interviews with IT support companies by assessing the specific needs of the practice. With this information, proceed to interview multiple companies for a potential service contract using the checklist below as a guide. Make notes of the answers provided and check off the questions once answered.

Assess Your Clinic Technology Support Needs

MAKE NOTE OF YOUR ANSWERS TO SUPPORT THE INTERVIEW

- ☐ What types of software are currently used at the clinic? EMR, file storage, email, accounting, telehealth?

- ☐ What types of hardware are currently used at the clinic? Computers, printers, network devices?

- ☐ Does the clinic have a secure backup or disaster recovery system?

- ☐ What level of computer expertise is available in-house to support the clinic?

- ☐ Is there an appropriately skilled individual to act as your clinic's Security Lead?

- ☐ Does the clinic need IT support past typical business hours?

- ☐ How quickly is a response expected for critical issues and non-critical issues?

- ☐ Will the physicians work from home or other remote locations?

- ☐ Are there any upcoming changes planned for the clinic such as new staff, new equipment, new technologies to consider?

Interview Local IT Support Companies

IT COMPANY EXPERIENCE QUESTIONS

- ☐ Does their staff have current certifications in operating systems and networking?

- ☐ Do they have experience working with private networks?

☐ Do they have experience working with clinics on the Private Physicians Network (PPN)?

☐ Is their staff skilled in the installation and maintenance of wireless networks?

☐ Are they familiar with Canadian privacy regulations: Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA), Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA), Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)?

☐ Do they have knowledge of encryption and authentication methods to secure data and manage access?

☐ Are they able to design and implement robust information backup and recovery procedures that meet Canadian privacy regulations?

☐ Do they have experience in assisting and are they able to provide support with security/privacy breach investigations?

☐ Can they share examples of documented processes for implementing security measures?

☐ Do they have a business license and the proper insurance?

☐ Will assigned support staff sign confidentiality agreements? Agreements can be found under Tools and Resources on the DTO website, Physician Office IT Security section.

☐ Are they familiar with the tools and resources offered by the DTO such as the Physician Office IT Security Guide and Clinic IT Support Community?

IT SUPPORT SERVICE QUESTIONS

☐ What type of support assistance can they provide? Over the phone, remote desktop, on-site?

☐ What is their coverage on weekdays, after-hours, weekends?

☐ Do they sell computer equipment and supplies? Is it required to buy from them?

☐ Do they offer any additional support services beyond the standard IT support offerings?

☐ Ask to walk through some examples of how they would provide service. Suggest examples common or expected within your clinic, including an emergency example.
Are they able to assist creating and maintaining the following types of documentation to support your clinic:

☐ A clinic map showing the physical locations of equipment.

☐ Specifications and/or warranty information for technology equipment.

☐ Software inventory including: licenses, certificates, subscription renewal dates, and support information.

☐ A network scheme showing the logical location of connected clinic systems for rapid troubleshooting.

☐ Logs for equipment and software changes including configuration details and secure disposal tracking.

☐ Logs for user access, system performance, backup processes and security update schedules.

IT SUPPORT CONTRACT AND COST QUESTIONS

☐ What options are covered in the support agreement? Support may include hardware, software (including patches), network monitoring, staff training, strategic planning.

☐ What are the contract cancellation terms?

☐ Do they provide guaranteed response times in their service agreement?

☐ How are services billed for the different support levels they provide? Frequency, subscription type?

Most IT support companies offer a choice of service levels. Ask about available service options:

☐ Pay-as-you-go: the clinic pays an hourly rate or a fixed price.

☐ Break-fix: charged hourly or offered on a fixed price contract like an insurance policy.

☐ Managed Service: IT company actively manages your clinic systems (preferred).

☐ Parts included: IT company fixes hardware problems at their cost.

Related Materials

Physician Office IT Security Guide

For more information, guidance, or support contact:

Doctors Technology Office
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🌐 www.doctorsofbc.ca/doctors-technology-office