Doctors Technology Office: Technical Bulletin

DTO TB - **#15-002**	Recommended Action re**: Security Risk - Windows XP**

Brief Description (Non-Technical):

Support and updates for Windows XP are no longer available. Vulnerabilities will not be patched or fixed. In addition, the use of software programs that cannot be patched violates security compliance with the PIPED Act (Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act).

You may also want to check with your EMR vendor to understand their support model for clinics still using Windows XP.

Potential Impact:
If you continue to use Windows XP now that support has ended, your computer will still work but it might become more vulnerable to security risks and viruses. You may begin to encounter performance issues with newer hardware devices (i.e. printers, scanners, etc.) and/or other software products (including new EMR software releases) as they may not be compatible with Windows XP.

Updated anti-malware/ anti-virus protection will not necessarily mitigate the aforementioned security issues.

Solution:
Please check with your EMR vendor as to what versions of Windows they support.
- As a general rule, avoid using Windows Home Editions and upgrade to Pro versions for business use.
- Our initial assessment has identified some risks and impacts that you should consider before upgrading to Windows 10.   Please read DTO TB - #15-003: Recommended Action re: Windows 10 Upgrade for more information

If you are using Windows XP we recommend that you consult with your local IT support vendor as soon as possible to plan an upgrade of your operating system to a supported version.

Background:
As of April 8, 2014, Microsoft discontinued support for Windows XP 12 years after it was first released.   Therefore, security of data held on, or accessed by, PCs running Windows XP could be at risk. Privacy and security risks will only increase as time passes.

For more Information, please find Microsoft's official statement on Windows XP here.

Details and Additional Information (Technical):

Due to the diversity of hardware and software in clinics, specific actions should be reviewed with your local IT support vendor as each clinic environment and the potential transition risks will be different: (download required updated drivers before upgrading you computer)

- Please check with your EMR software vendor:
    - Confirm recommended hardware/software specifications for optimal performance.
    - Ensure continuous access to your EMR software. (Will reinstallation be needed?)
- Consider a phased approach to upgrades in order to reduce the impact of unexpected incompatibilities which could affect business continuity.
    - If possible, change or update/ upgrade a single PC at a time, so unforeseen issues can be identified. Here are some examples:
        - unique software requirements
        - unique or outdated equipment or drivers
        - unique needed files that become missing or start malfunctioning (what happened to all my favorites, short cuts, backup and so forth)
- Office hardware (multifunction, scanners, faxes, printers) should be reviewed to ensure they meet the requirements of the OS you will be upgrading to

Please do not attempt this on your own, but rather work with your local IT support vendor.

If you have any questions or would like more information contact:

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