7: Employ Safeguards

Safeguards are a combination of policies, processes, practices, and technologies that are intended to protect personal information. Whether personal information is recorded on paper or electronically, appropriate and reasonable physical, administrative and technical safeguards are necessary to ensure that privacy is protected and confidentiality is maintained. Here is a checklist to guide you:

☐ Are paper files or computers exposed to loss or theft?

☐ Are organizational measures such training, security clearances, system access controls and agreements in place?

☐ Are physical measures such as locked filing cabinets, limited access to offices and alarm systems in place?

☐ Are fire suppression systems inspected on an annual basis?

☐ Are technological tools such as passwords, encryption and firewalls in place?

Evaluate how well personal information is safeguarded and establish stronger safeguards if required. Here is a checklist to guide you:

☐ Set mobile phones to lock when inactive and require passwords for access

☐ Encrypt laptops and mobile devices and require a username and password access

☐ Implement intrusion detection on computer systems

☐ Establish policies and procedures in privacy, information security, system security, security incident response and breach management

☐ Provide new staff with privacy and security training and do refresher training periodically

☐ Implement access controls to prevent snooping or unauthorized access to patient records

☐ Lock paper files up at night

☐ Review system users' security access to ensure it is required for them to do their job

☐ Obtain legal commitments to privacy and security from employees, and third parties

☐ Use a cross cut shredder to destroy documents on site

☐ Set network and application passwords to expire each 30, 60 or 90 days

☐ Lock your keyboard when leaving your workstation

☐ Logoff computer systems and the network before leaving for the day

☐ Protect personal information on laptops and mobile devices with encryption or passwords

☐ Protect personal information in transit with encryption or passwords