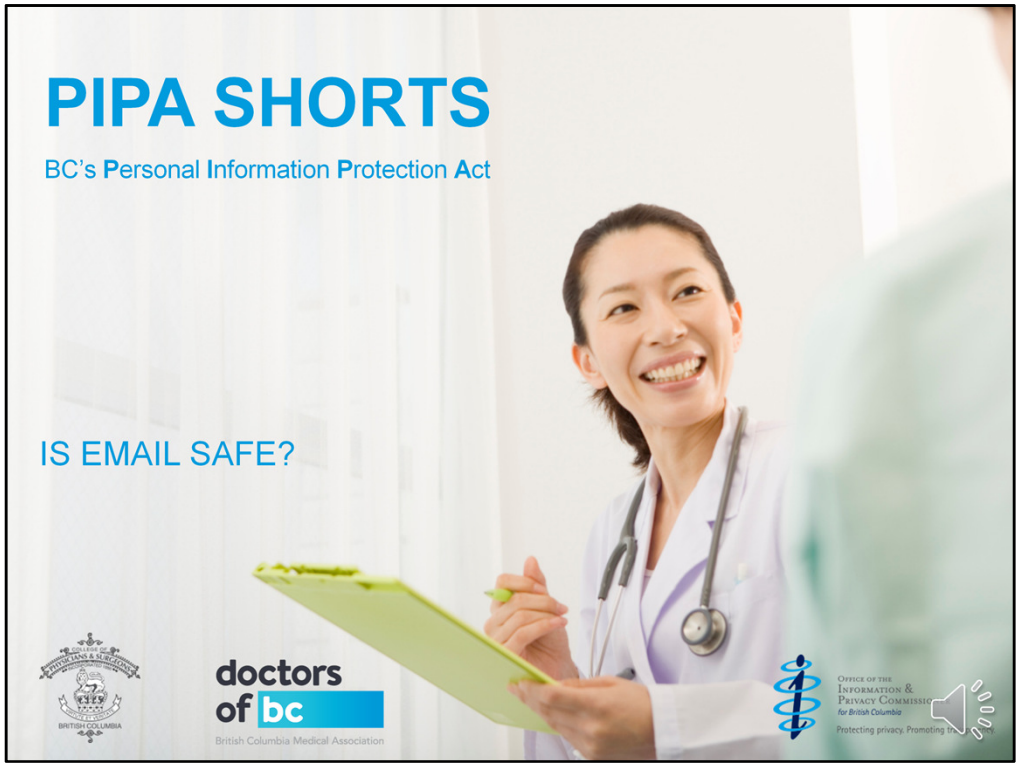
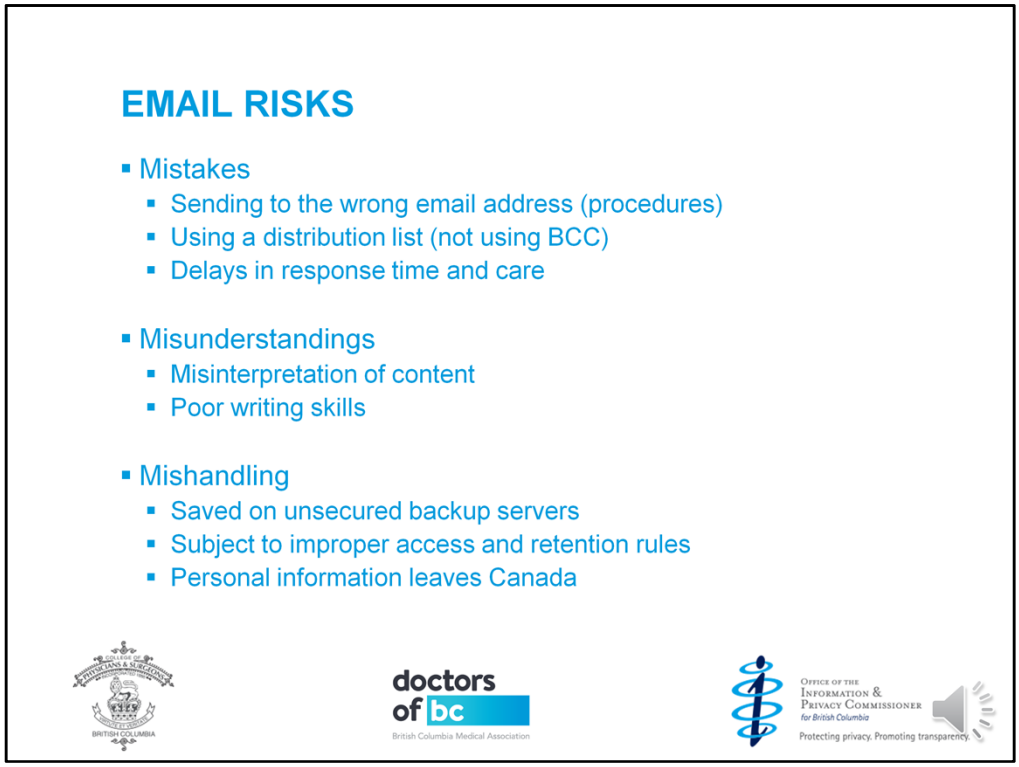


- Welcome to a webinar about understanding BC's Personal Information Protection Act or PIPA for short.
- If you're a physician or MOA working in a private practice, this webinar is for you.



There are lots of risks involved in using email to communicate with patients

- Mistakes happen
- Sometimes an email is sent to the wrong recipient – you need to have procedures documented on how to respond

  For example,

  1) asking the recipient to confirm they have destroyed any printed copies and permanently deleted the email received in error and

  2) Informing the patient about

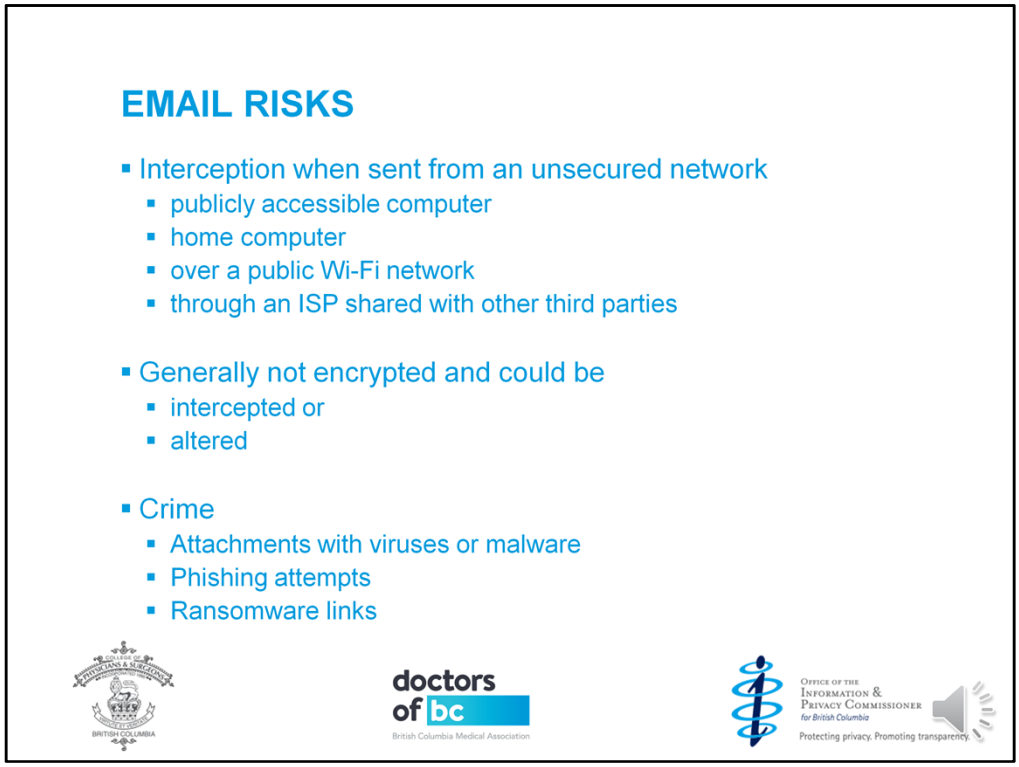
     a) what happened

     b) that you have confirmation of destruction and permanent deletion from the accidental recipient

     c) that you don't believe there is any real risk of significant harm to them as a result of the error and

     d) an apology for the inconvenience
- If you send to a distribution list and don't put all the recipient email addresses in the BCC, you've had a breach because you've exposed email addresses of other individuals
- Delays could negatively impact a patient's care if timeliness is critical
- Misunderstandings can happen with
  - one-way communications and two-way is always better
  - or if the sender has poor writing skills but has better verbal skills
- Mishandling can occur if information is
  - Saved on unsecured backup servers
  - Subject to improper access and retention rules and

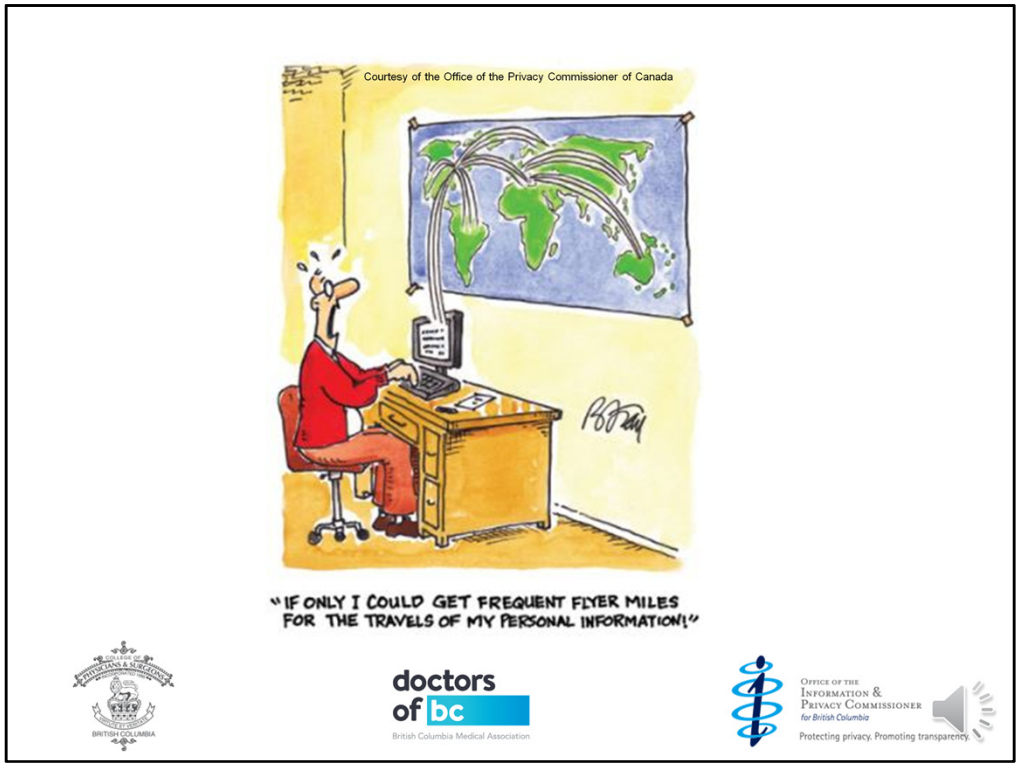
- Personal information can often leave Canada



Other risks include

- The potential for the email to be intercepted if it's sent from an unsecured network like
    - a publicly accessible computer,
    - home computer
    - over a public Wi-Fi network or
    - through an ISP shared with other third parties
- Email is generally not encrypted and could be
    - intercepted or
    - altered
- Crime needs to be considered as
    - attachments may contain viruses or malware
    - hackers could have obtained access to a patient's email and be on a phishing expedition or
    - ransomware links could be present

You need to take reasonable steps to protect personal information under your control

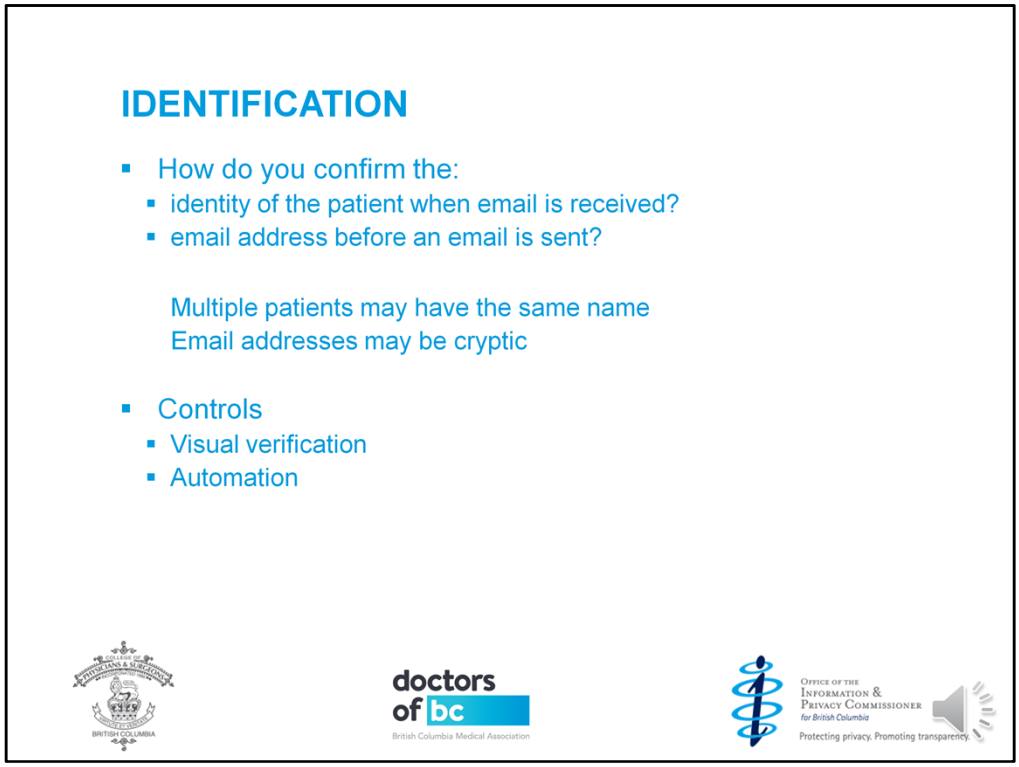


Here's an example of how email travels

If you include personal health information in an email, it will very likely leave Canada
This may make it subject to laws in other jurisdictions that have inadequate or no protections

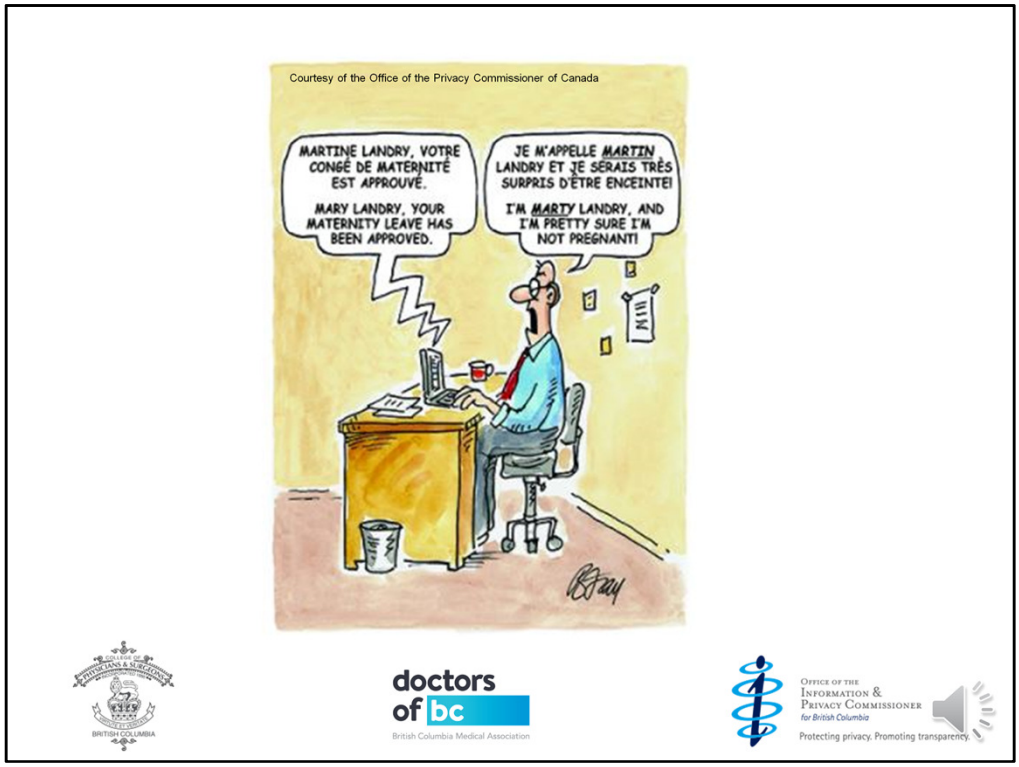
WHERE DO YOU START?

- Inform your patients of
    - the potential risks of using email
    - precautions you need to take to anonymize their personal information
    - alternatives available such as encryption, postal mail or courier and the impacts of using those alternatives and
    - their right to withhold or withdraw consent
- Make sure your policies and procedures cover
    - acceptable use, verification and email etiquette
    - removing sensitive personal information and diagnosis or prognosis as this should be done in a face to face meeting
    - managing the email component of medical records
    - password protecting attachments or encrypting emails and
    - rules for retention and destruction
- Most importantly, make sure your employees are trained



- Think about how you confirm the
  - identity of the patient when email is received
  - or the email address before an email is sent
    - when you might have multiple patients with the same name
    - or the email address is cryptic and doesn't contain the patient's name
- There are a number of controls that can be used
  - Visual verification is a manual, administrative control where the email address is confirmed by referring to a patient's electronic or paper records
  - There are several automated tools that can be used to authenticate email addresses

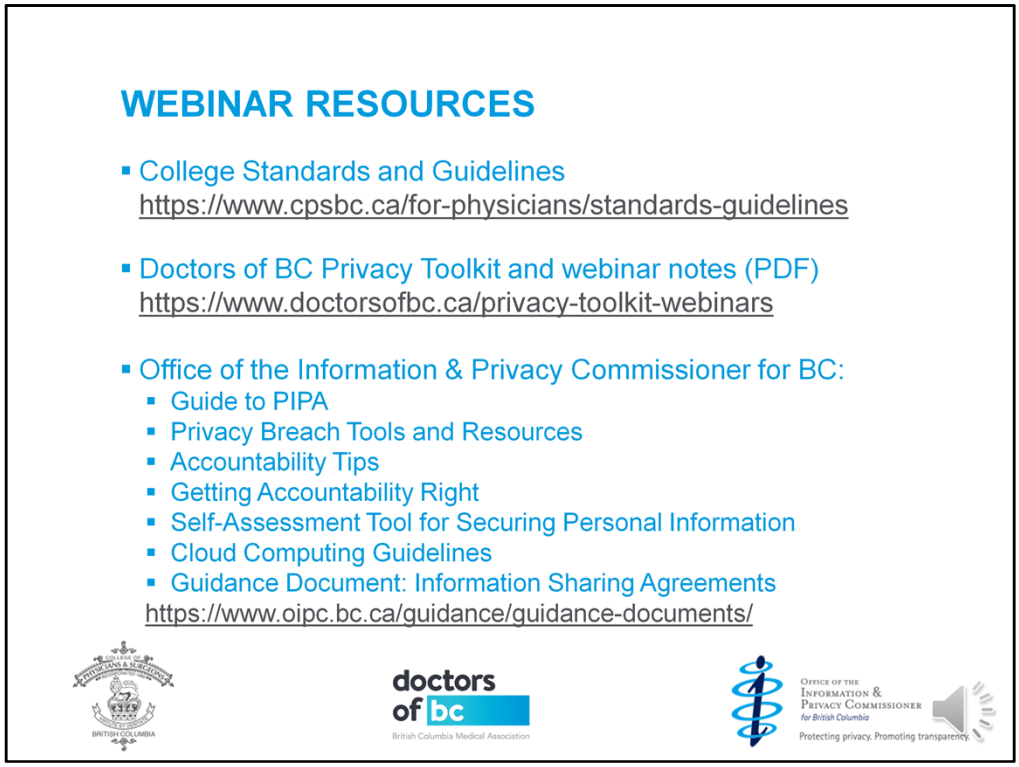
    For example, your email software should be set up to display the full name of the patient which could help if it's unique



Here's an example of an email being sent to the wrong patient

All of your outgoing emails should contain a disclaimer

Check out the Tools Tab in the Privacy Toolkit for the wording you can use



Links to these Resources are in a PDF document on the Webinars page of the Privacy Toolkit

- College Standards and Guidelines
- Doctors of BC Privacy Toolkit and webinar notes
- and Privacy Commissioner guides, tips and resources

Let us know if you have any questions about complying with PIPA