Amanda Atkin on what you should know about the Information Governance Review

Information: to share or not to share?

The Information Governance Review is to advise on how to achieve a better balance between protecting and sharing confidential information. With echoes of protecting and sharing confidence to improve patient care,1 there is an appropriate balance between the protection of patient information and the use and sharing of information to improve patient care.2

In the context of dental practices, this is a review around the huge issue of confidentiality of information, which is something dental practices are already aware of the need for. Practices have started to monitor the use of email and to manage how staff share information when a reception area is crowded with patients.

The mandate for the Review arose from a recommendation by the NHS Future Forum (a body set up by the government on specific topics) and the Review aims to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between the protection of patient information and the use and sharing of information to improve patient care.3

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As dental practices already have to be compliant with CQC requirements, which also cover elements of information governance such as privacy, dignity, equality and confidentiality, the Review covers that need from a higher, more robust level. Already dental practices are required to undergo the IG Toolkit (Information Governance Toolkit) to embed and ensure staff have a clear understanding of what information governance means for the practice, staff and, most importantly, patients.

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About the author

Amanda Atkin runs Akapure Ltd and offers practice support, training and consultancy on information governance, CQC compliance, National Minimum Standards and HTM01-05.

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