Finding answers to questions about record-keeping requirements is one of the top reasons for visits to the College’s website.

So when we began the process of updating this policy, we knew it was critical to get the details right. And that was only possible through extensive consultation. The feedback we received has resulted in a better informed policy.

The College’s President agrees. “The policy now reflects a changing culture,” said Dr. Bob Byrick. “More doctors are using electronic records, and we are working more closely with other health-care professionals than we have in the past. As a result, we had new questions to answer and I believe the policy does an excellent job of answering them,” he said.

So here are the 10 things you need to know about the College’s updated Medical Records policy. The policy accompanies this issue of Dialogue.

**The new policy:**

1. Includes more detail about record-keeping for electronic records. We even have tips for choosing an EMR vendor.
2. Contains a new section on procedural medicine that includes considerations for consultants’ records, consult notes for diagnostic and operative procedures and discharge summaries.
3. Improves the clarity about information-sharing within the “circle of care.”
4. Requires that all entries in the medical record be in either English or French.
5. Requires that all records be filed by patient, rather than by date – yes, even in walk-in clinics!
6. Provides advice on what to ask when entering into arrangements for commercial services with regard to scanning, maintenance, storage, destruction.
7. Includes guidelines that must be followed if original records are to be destroyed.
8. Provides direction for record-keeping in group practices, including a requirement that those of you who work in group practices have an agreement that establishes what to do with patient records if the group practice dissolves.
9. Requires the use of CPPs for primary care physicians and strongly recommends their use for other specialists.
10. Provides lots of clickable links in the online version to take you to useful resources.