

## **Privacy, Memory Sticks/USB key or other portable Storage Devices**

The Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario (IPC) recently issued an Order to Durham Region in response to the loss of an un-encrypted memory stick storing personal health information (PHI) on 83,524 patients. In response to this Order and to ensure compliance with our legal requirements to protect the privacy and security of confidential information, LHSC has implemented a strategy to ensure appropriate protection of information stored on memory sticks. This is in addition to the encryption system implemented in 2007 for laptops.

Please approach your staff to ask if they use memory sticks/USB keys or other portable storage devices to store patient information or other confidential information on staff, affiliates or the business information of the organization.

1. In any case in which staff indicate that they do store confidential information on a memory stick or other USB storage device, determine if there is a role related reason for the information to be stored on a portable device versus the secure hospital network.
2. Wherever there is **NOT** a necessary role related reason for the use of the portable device to store confidential information - contact HelpDesk to facilitate movement of the information to the network and to have the portable device “scrubbed” to ensure full deletion of the confidential information.
3. Wherever there **IS** a necessary role related reason for the use of a portable device to store confidential information - contact Helpdesk to arrange for the purchase of an encrypted memory stick or the encryption of a laptop

Questions can be directed to Wendy Komar, Privacy Manager or Glen Kalyta, Information Security Officer

It is vital that confidential patient, staff, affiliate and business information be securely stored to ensure we meet our legal, professional and ethical obligations.

Thank you

Judy Farrell & Peter Gilbert