

Professional Practice Quiz

Where Have All The Records Gone?

As QA Manager for the *College of Dietitians of Ontario*, I have recently participated in drafting the new *Proposed Regulation on Records Relating to Members Practices 2005*. I have also helped many Registered Dietitians understand their responsibility for records under the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004*. This work has prompted me to reflect on my own record keeping practices, a reflection I would like to share with you.

From 1987 to 1989, I worked as a private consulting Registered Dietitian for adult and pediatric clients. Over the years, I kept the records in a locked filing cabinet in many places I called home. When I last moved in 2002, I reviewed these files and noted that the records for all the adult patients had passed the ten years following the date of my last intervention. The two 12-year-old clients I had seen in 1987 would have celebrated their 18th birthday in 1993 and I

needed to keep these files until 2003. It was, therefore, acceptable to destroy all but these two files.

Still, I wondered about holding onto all my files in the event that I might do more private consulting in the future. Would I be able to market my services to these past clients? While thinking about this, I remembered *Section 34 (1) (a) of CDO's Proposed Advertising Regulation (1997)* that states, "a member may not contact or communicate with, or cause or allow any person to contact or communicate with potential patients, either in person or by telephone, in an attempt to solicit business". This clarified my decision. I brought the files to work and placed them in the College's confidential shredding box with permission from the Registrar.

Did I dispose of the records correctly?

Answer: page 11

Self-Directed Learning Tool — Report 2005

Aggregate Data - 2005

The new report from the *Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Tool 2005* is now posted on the CDO website. This rich aggregate data is based on the indicators found in the *Professional Standards for Dietitians in Canada (1997)*. It gives information from RD assessments about:

- changes and challenges to quality practice;
- development of professional goals for improvement;
- evaluation of previous year's goals;
- the impact of learning on clients.

The data is presented in a consistent, clear table, allowing ease of comparison from year to year. You can compare aggregate information from 1998, 1999, 2001, 2004 and 2005 (new). These are now available on the CDO website in the *Resource Room ▶ Publications: scroll down to SDL Tool Reports*. You are encouraged to review, discuss and share this information with your

colleagues and supervisors. If you need any clarification or additional qualitative information, please contact the College.

SDL Tool Evaluation 2005

- 85% members submitted their tool on line;
- 15% submitted a hard copy either by mail or fax;
- All members were invited to evaluate the Tool: 549 members submitted an evaluation on line and 251 a hard copy.

The two most frequent suggestions for improving the Tool were:

1. to allow the flexibility to print and save the entire SDL Tool instead of section by section; and
2. to reduce the amount of information and reading on the online tool. In the 2006 Tool, improvements will be made to both the online system and content addressing most of the suggestions made by members.

The results of the evaluation were very positive: Typical comments were:

"My self reflection is enhanced by the comprehensive framework of the SDL process and the detailed components. The sections flow well to focus on the professional improvements in a very practical way. I am proud to be a member of this College and to be so well supported to continue to learn and to develop new skills."

"Love the online tool! Would never go back to manual/paper."

Highlights of the evaluation are posted on the website in the *Resource Room ▶ Publications: scroll down to SDL Tool Reports*.

Professional Practice Quiz

Where Have All The Records Gone? Did I dispose of them correctly?

Answer to Quiz on page 5.

According to the *Proposed Regulation on Records Relating to Members Practices 2005* and the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004* the answer would be "Yes". However, best practice would suggest that I missed a few important steps. What were they?

1. Both the *Jurisprudence Handbook for Registered Dietitians in Ontario, 2003* and the *Record keeping Guidelines for Registered Dietitians 2004* recommend that a record indicating when the destruction occurred, the name of the client's whose records were destroyed and the date of the last intervention should have been kept.

2. Another step for best practice would have been to have someone witness the destruction. I followed these best practice steps when I destroyed the last two records this year.

Practice Points

- Know the length of time to keep records
- Use appropriate confidential destruction methods
- Keep record of what was destroyed
- Where possible have a witness when destroying clients' personal health information.

Security of Records during Retention

- Is my closet secure enough?
- Are the files under lock and key?
- In the event of an accident, would my family or estate know what to do with these records?
- If I move out of the country or province, how do I make sure that my former clients have access to their records?

Security and access of client files will be discussed in our next *résumé*.

e-notice



College of Dietitians of Ontario

www.cdo.on.ca

e-notice

This month, we are launching our new email notices. You will easily recognize them by their title and format which will be the same as the heading of this article.

The purpose of *e-notices* is to send members key information on a timely basis:

- reminders of events, workshops
- Registration Program or renewal notices
- QA Program notices

The *e-notice* is only intended for essential, time-sensitive information. We will use these notices responsibly, respecting your time and email capacity. The information will be reprinted in CDO's quarterly publication of *résumé* for members without email.

e-résumé

Responding to membership requests for more timely and convenient news by email, the CDO will launch its first *e-résumé* in Spring 2006. We will continue to publish the hard copy of *résumé* for members without email and for those who prefer hard copy.

How are we doing with *résumé*?

We are seeking your feedback about our newsletter *résumé*. As *résumé* is our primary tool for communicating with you, we want it to be effective in getting you the information you want and need about regulations and your practice.

Please let us know how we are doing by answering the survey posted on the home page of our website: www.cdo.on.ca. If you would like a hard copy of the survey, please contact Leila at reception.cdo.on.ca

We promise to take all your comments and concerns seriously and to consider them in planning our future newsletters.