

# Staff bulletin

For the urgent attention of all staff

14 January 2009

## New policy and guidance on Information Governance and Data Protection

**This staff bulletin tells you about important changes to the use and storage of electronic information.**

You will be aware of a number of high profile data losses in the public sector including:

- the loss of a memory stick in NHS Lothian containing the records of 200 psychiatric patients;
- the theft of a number of personal computers (PCs) and laptops from NHS Boards;
- the residue of miscellaneous items left on redundant hospital sites; and
- data lost in transit containing details of prisoners and members of the armed forces.

In response to renewed Scottish Government policy and guidance in this area, our Senior Management Team and Board have approved a new policy on the use of mobile/portable storage devices, such as USB memory sticks, CDs, DVDs, MP3 Players and mobile phones.

The new policy will ensure compliance with recent Scottish Government guidance as well as relevant legislation (from May 2008 data misuse is a criminal offence in certain circumstances).

### What everyone needs to know

We ask that all staff read the latest guidance on the eHealth Mobile Data Protection Standard which is available at <http://www.ehealth.scot.nhs.uk/>

You are not allowed to electronically transfer person identifiable data to external agencies, home or personal computers and email accounts. This includes the transfer of data on USB memory sticks, CDs, DVDs, MP3 players and mobile phones with data storage capacity.

**Laptops to be encrypted  
Friday 30 January  
2009**

**Memory sticks to be  
returned to eHealth  
Monday 2 February**

**USB ports deactivated  
for all non NWTC  
memory sticks  
throughout February**

### What staff with laptop computers need to do

All staff who have laptop computers have been contacted by the IT Helpdesk to have it encrypted – unencrypted laptops will be withdrawn from use by February.

The eHealth Department will ensure that all users of laptops are provided with a secure locking device in order that the risk of theft is minimised. These will be issued by the end of January.

It is, however, the responsibility of the individual to ensure the physical security of the laptop at all times.

