



Alberta College of
Speech-Language Pathologists
and Audiologists
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Record Retention and Privacy Considerations

Clinical Documentation and Record Keeping Guidelines, Release Date September 2011

Pages 13 and 14 of ACSLPA's Clinical Documentation and Record Keeping Guideline outline professional responsibilities of the SLP or audiologist with respect to the retention and storage of client records. These requirements may surprise some clinicians (particularly private practitioners who may have never dealt with a policy in this area), and give registrants cause to pause and reflect on how to ensure that the requirements are met.

Disclosing record management practices, (including privacy requirements) to clients and their families is an important consideration in the record keeping process. Some ACSLPA registrants have suggested that informing clients "up front" of record retention requirements could be viewed as a proactive step, ensuring that they are aware of how long information will be retained, what steps they should take in the event they are requesting this information, or any amendments to it, at a later date.

Although this type of information can always be shared verbally, another option would be to develop a "one-pager" on record retention and privacy policies that could be shared with clients at the initial appointment. Or, if you are based in an office, how about posting the one pager in a visible spot for client review?

The Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada has a comprehensive online resource entitled "Creating a Privacy Brochure for Your Customers", which can be accessed at www.priv.gc.ca/resource/tool-outil/english/toolbox_privacy-brochure.asp