



## **NEWS RELEASE – April 18, 2011**

### **New advisory issued to Saskatchewan health care providers for destruction of patient files.**

Saskatchewan Information and Privacy Commissioner, Gary Dickson, has issued an *Advisory for Saskatchewan Health Trustees for Record Disposition*. This is being sent to all health regulatory colleges and bodies in Saskatchewan.

Dickson stated that: “The Advisory is a response to a troubling number of incidents involving the personal health information of patients that has not been properly stored or destroyed.” The Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC) is now completing an investigation into the discovery on March 23, 2011 of thousands of patient records that had been found in a large recycling bin in Regina.

Despite extensive media coverage of that incident and resulting investigation, the OIPC has now received reports of four other cases where patient personal health information has been found in dumpsters or has been improperly disposed of.

Commissioner Dickson has recommended that all Saskatchewan health trustee organizations immediately implement eight steps to ensure compliance with *The Health Information Protection Act* (HIPA). These steps include:

- Ensure that the trustee organization has written policies and procedures as prescribed by section 16 of HIPA including physical, administrative and technical measures reasonable for the protection of personal health information.
- Ensure that there is a proper record retention and disposition schedule and that it is followed.
- Ensure that when disposing of personal health information all materials are fully shredded or otherwise completely destroyed.

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This advisory is now accessible at [www.oipc.sk.ca](http://www.oipc.sk.ca) under the *What's New* tab.

For further information, please contact:

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