Healthcare Guidelines and Solutions that Support Them

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Introduction

Whether you're a hospital administrator, aged care provider or general practitioner, maintaining compliance with industry standards is a common challenge for any healthcare facility.

Regulations and standards are necessary to ensure that personnel are meeting their requirements and performing their duties according to best practice. More importantly, healthcare legislation safeguards medical patients and aged care residents from potential harm and ensures they receive the highest quality of care available.

Maintaining compliance is essential to operating a safe and effective healthcare facility, but can be difficult without the proper tools. With the right combination of hardware and software solutions, healthcare professionals can simplify compliance across all departments.

Navigating Healthcare Compliance

Meeting industry requirements depends on healthcare facilities staying updated on the latest and most pressing regulations that govern their everyday operations. In the modern age where privacy, security and safety guidelines are changing at unprecedented rates, this task may seem especially daunting.

However, with the right set of technologies *at your side*, navigating the complexities of healthcare regulation can be simplified and streamlined across three critical areas of focus:

1. Patient privacy and document security
2. Patient safety and wellbeing
3. Medical, laboratory and Pharmaceutical labelling
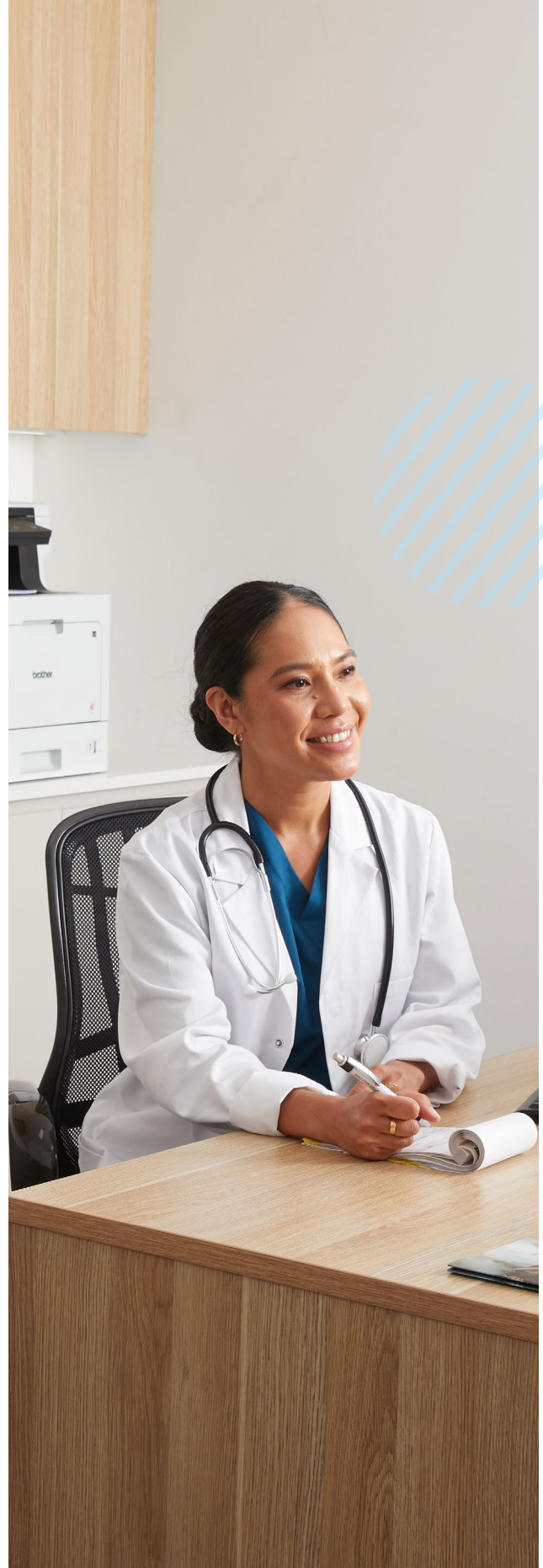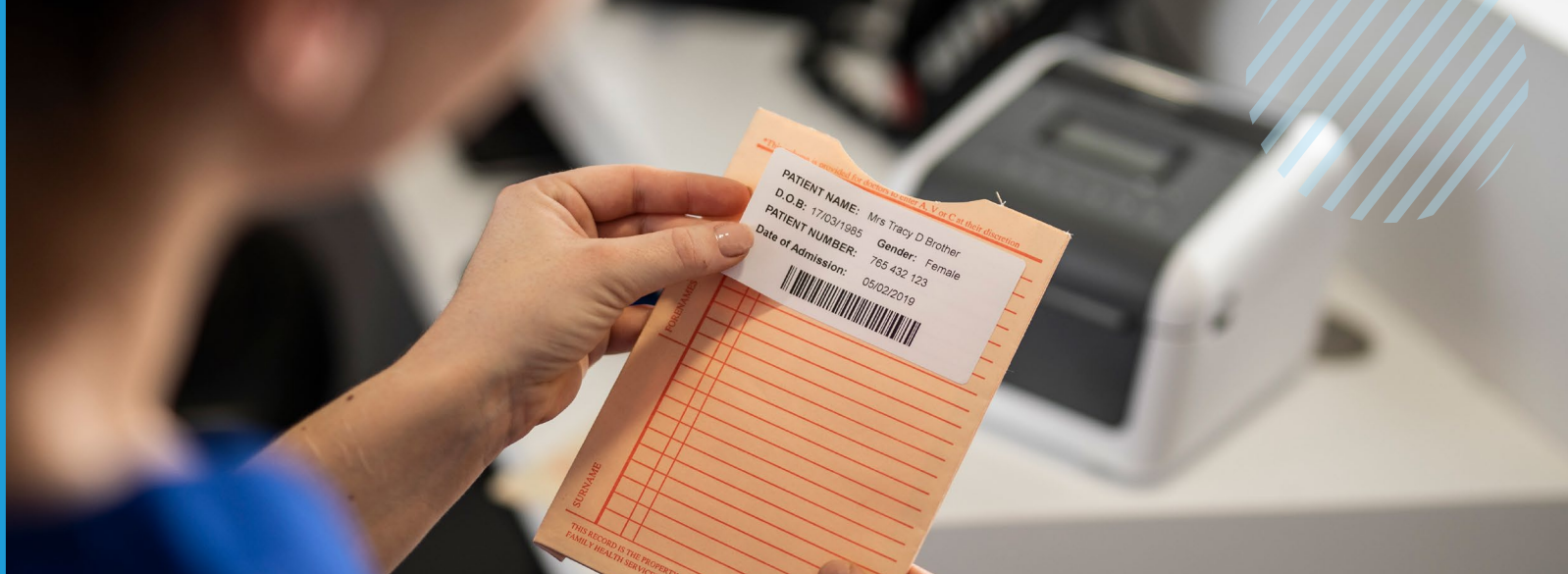
Patient Privacy and Document Security

Healthcare facilities collect a lot of sensitive data, including medical histories, addresses and payment information. The Privacy Act 1988[1] is the foremost legislation around patient privacy and holds private healthcare providers responsible for the following:

- The collection, use and disclosure of personal information

- Organisational governance and accountability

- Integrity and correction of information

- The rights of individuals to access their personal information

Although these processes are the bedrock of patient privacy and document security, many healthcare facilities still rely on paper-based methods and physical filing systems to record and store medical data. Those traditional workflows are not only error-prone, costly and time-consuming, but also offer limited protection.

Fortunately, Australian privacy standards are designed to be technology neutral. This allows an organisation to be flexible and implement emerging technologies as they see fit.

[1]Federal Register of Legislation, "Privacy Act 1988."

Optical Character Recognition

Optical Character Recognition (OCR) is a scanning software that turns physical documents into text that can be digitally edited, searched and stored. This powerful automated technology eliminates the need for manual data entry, thus reducing the risk of human error during the collection process.

By creating PDFs that are easily searchable, patients and personnel can quickly retrieve information in a timely manner - editable PDFs make it easy for staff to correct inaccurate information upon a patient's request, as required by law. OCR is bundled with many Brother devices, making this cutting-edge technology highly accessible for healthcare professionals.

Secure Hardware

Printers, scanners and multi-function devices are at the heart of the document journey. That means healthcare facilities need hardware solutions that are safe, secure and reliable when handling patient information. Brother devices are feature-rich and Cerner-certified with access controls, such as Secure Print Release. This requires personnel to input a PIN or tap an ID card to release documents, thus ensuring document confidentiality.

Devices also feature network-specific security features. For example, Internet Protocol Security (IPSec) encrypts data in transit to keep sensitive information completely confidential and comply with privacy regulations. Likewise, Transport Layer Security features encrypt data as it's being transferred through the network so that sensitive information isn't exposed to cyber threats.

Effective Print Management

IT administration and print management play an important role in document security. By combining PaperCut's cloud-based print management software with Brother's fleet of secure printers and multi-function devices, healthcare professionals can monitor their print deployments and supplies across all departments.

With increased visibility, administrators can manage print quotas, enforce policies and prevent unnecessary or risky print jobs. If a sensitive record is sent to print, staff can intercept the document using pull printing and conduct further evaluation, allowing them to protect patient confidentiality.

Patient Safety and Wellbeing

Safety, health and wellbeing are at the forefront of everything in the healthcare community. No matter the type of facility or provider, all healthcare organisations are expected and required to take appropriate measures that ensure patients, residents and staff are protected at all times.

Australian guidelines hold providers accountable around many safety conditions, including:

- Implementing systems to maintain and improve quality of care
- Identifying patients and matching them to the proper medications and treatments
- Managing all patient-facing visitors and ensuring there is no risk to health and safety
- Reducing organisational and operational risks with proper detection and mitigation

Tangible solutions that support these critical efforts are explored on the following page.

Patient ID Printing

Label printers are compact, high-speed and truly reliable — three qualities that are essential in a healthcare setting where space is limited and time is of the essence. Brother's thermal printers allow healthcare professionals to print patient identification wristbands quickly and easily at the point of care, admissions desk or anywhere in the facility.

Thermal label printers produce clearly readable wristbands and connect directly with the facility's administration system. In turn, you can link patient information straight from the database to a patient's barcoded wristband, allowing you to track their physical movements and quickly look up data in the event of an emergency.

Visitor Management

Managing visitors and their access to your facility is an especially important part of patient health and safety. With so many family members and guests coming and going, it's critical to keep tabs on their location during their stay. Visitor management solutions provide healthcare professionals the tools to monitor visitor movements and maintain patient safety.

Digital registration kiosks allow visitors to input their information privately and accurately while also empowering staff to check visitor data

against law enforcement databases. High-quality label printers can be leveraged to print visitor badges complete with barcodes and QR codes, which can be used to control guest access to particular areas of the facility. In the event of an incident, badges can be digitally revoked or adjusted so that risks can be mitigated as effectively as possible.

Warning and Safety Labelling

Healthcare professionals rely on medical equipment and other assets to perform their everyday procedures and responsibilities. Many of these devices may be hazardous if used improperly or accessed by an untrained individual, which is why they are under strict regulation. Safety and warning labels are an effective way to alert personnel, patients and visitors of a potential risk to their wellbeing.

Brother's TZe laminated tapes are resistant to the abrasions, liquids, temperatures and UV rays that are common to healthcare settings, making them an ideal solution for all safety labelling applications. Printed on long-lasting material with superior adhesive strength, the resulting labels are perfect for labelling areas of a facility that are off limits, devices that may be dangerous and equipment settings that aren't to be changed. In turn, healthcare providers can ensure patient safety and wellbeing without worry that they're in violation of industry regulations.

Medical, Laboratory and Pharmaceutical Labelling

Accurate, reliable and easily printable labels are essential to all areas of healthcare.

As valuable sources of information, the way that labels are printed and stored are subject to industry standards, especially as they relate to the following conditions:

- Legibility of the label content
- Label size and shape
- Storage of particular labels, including blood and specimen labels
- Instructions for safe use of medical equipment
- Drug interaction data
- Expiration dates, if possible

Applicable solutions that service these standards are described on the following page.

Food Labelling

Catering and food service are an important part of a patient's health during their stay in a healthcare setting. Labels must state a patient's dietary needs, allergies and room number to prevent dangerous mix-ups and mistakes. The exchange of data between patient records and catering services is therefore carefully regulated.

On-demand labelling solutions can be used by hospital staff to print out meal information, correctly identify patients and deliver food with the confidence that their patient is safe. Tamper-evident labels are especially useful to ensure that meal packaging is sealed and secured so that patients can safely consume their food without fear of an adverse reaction.

Specimen and Sample Labelling

Lab technicians use many types of labels when working with blood, specimens and other samples. These types of labels often come into contact with extreme temperatures and harsh chemicals, as required to safely store vials and conduct tests. Ordinary labels stand no match against these conditions, which may cause a label to deteriorate — thus rendering it useless.

TZe laminated tapes from Brother are designed to be used in these extreme conditions. Made with seven layers of protective material, they're

able to withstand temperatures of -80 and 150 degrees celsius and are resistant to chemicals, heat, UV rays and abrasions. With superior durability and adhesive strength, TZe tapes are the ideal choice for any extreme healthcare application.

Medication and Prescription Labels

Ensuring that prescriptions and medicines get to where they need to be is an essential piece of the healthcare industry, and labels are a huge part of that process. Dispensing the incorrect prescriptions to the wrong patients isn't only a violation of privacy and a costly mistake, but it can also put people at risk.

Brother's compact label printers offer a safe and efficient way to print prescription labels. With easy-to-use devices, remarkable print speeds and barcode printing, pharmacy staff can streamline their workflow and ensure that their dispensed medicines make it to the correct person and location.

Healthcare Solutions from Brother

Navigating the ever-changing standards of the healthcare industry is no easy task. The good news is that there are tangible solutions available to you and your healthcare facility that can simplify compliance and allow you to focus on what matters most: providing quality care to your residents and patients.

When you partner with Brother, you're not merely gaining access to an unprecedented fleet of cutting-edge technologies, you're choosing to leverage an expert team of industry specialists. Whether it comes to printing, scanning, labelling or more, we work with you to identify the optimal tools for your specific needs.

For more information on our Healthcare Solutions, contact our team today.

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