



welcome!

Welcome to MINC Link, the official newsletter of the MINC#NIMC Corporation. We'll be publishing quarterly, to keep users, licensees and others current on the MINC system, its features and activities. And please feel free to share MINC Link with others, or have them contact us and we'll put them on our mailing list.

We also welcome your questions, comments and experiences with the MINC number system, as another way of keeping everyone up to date.

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what is the value of minc?

All organizations which maintain a database of physician information currently assign an identifier of some type to provide a unique designation for each individual. Depending on the organization, this could be a registration number, a member number, or a billing or file number.

The difficulty is that each organization tends to use its own system of identifiers, and these are typically not linked or comparable. For use within each organization that is not a problem, but trying to match individuals who may be recorded on two different databases is a tedious and error-prone process.

Hence the development of MINC numbers - unique lifetime identifiers, recognized across the country. Regardless of what internal identifier an organization may use, by attaching a MINC number to their members means that they can now reliably and easily compare or merge their database with any other organization which also uses MINC. Of course, privacy legislation, including proper consent for such merging of information, would need to be observed.

MINC numbers will not replace any existing registration, billing or organization-specific number, nor do they convey any privilege, rights or status. They are simply a nationally-recognized "alias" to identify the individual.

A more complete description of MINC and how it works is available on the MINC website, at www.minc-nimc.ca.

about minc ...

MINC is the Medical Identification Number for Canada (Numéro d'identification médicale du Canada), a system developed to provide reliable lifetime identification for every individual in the Canadian medical education and practice systems. The MINC system is operated by MINC#NIMC, a not-for-profit national corporation. The Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada (FMRAC) and the Medical Council of Canada (MCC) are its co-owners.

MINC numbers will be issued to all individuals at the time of first entry to any aspect of the Canadian medical education or practice systems. Once assigned, MINC numbers remain unchanged throughout the individual's entire medical career.

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atlantic provinces to begin implementation

Two of the Atlantic provinces have begun work on implementing MINC numbers for their physicians.

The Newfoundland Medical Board and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia have each recently signed a *Memorandum of Agreement* with MINC, and are starting the technical work to provide secure computer linkage to the MINC host.

Elsewhere:

- a) The Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba have already implemented MINC numbers in their provinces.
- b) The CPS British Columbia is working on privacy issues, and is conducting pilot tests of the technical components, and
- c) The Medical Council of Canada is making preparations for the implementation of MINC later this month, for all applicants of their exams.

minc has moved

As of January 1, 2005, administrative support for MINC#NIMC has been contracted to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA). Mr. John Swiniarski (an Assistant Registrar there) has been appointed as Executive Director of MINC#NIMC. This arrangement will provide a broader and more consistent management in structure to the development and operation of the MINC system.

minc for licensed users

Although the MINC system was created so that only the medical regulatory authorities, plus the MCC, could apply for MINC numbers to be issued to physicians they register, the real potential of the numbers will only be reached when other organizations become Licensed Users of the MINC system.

The MINC system can be licensed by non-commercial organizations for specified and approved research or administrative purposes. Prospective licensees may include:

- ministries of health
- hospital boards/regional health authorities
- faculties of medicine
- medical societies or associations
- physician resource researchers or planners
- credentialing institutions
- etc.

By entering a licensing agreement, an organization would be provided with the MINC numbers for each of their members/registrants, and could then use these numbers when dealing with any other MINC Licensed User. The purposes of use would be specified in the licensing agreement, and audits of their use would be permitted.

Licensing agreements would essentially enable organizations to "join the club". They could then use MINC numbers in their dealings with any other club member, but not with any organization outside the club. Thus exchange of information would be facilitated, but within a controlled environment.



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