



minc seen as key to national credential verification agency

MINC was broadly endorsed as key to the functioning of the new National Credentials Verification Agency and Physician Registry (NCVA-PR) by a recent workshop for stakeholders.

Held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Federation of Medical Regulatory Agencies of Canada (FMRAC), workshop discussion ranged broadly over how the NCVA-PR would work, who the customers and suppliers would be, and how to manage information flow on a national scale.

MINC was seen as key to the management of physician data. Being a unique, lifetime identifier, endorsed by all members of FMRAC plus the Medical Council of Canada, MINC numbers were recognized as being the logical mechanism to gather and share data.

With this endorsement and new large-scale user, completion of the implementation of MINC numbers in the remaining Canadian jurisdictions takes on a new urgency.

implementation of minc in newfoundland

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Newfoundland and Labrador recently became the fourth jurisdiction in Canada to implement MINC numbers for its members. Congratulations, and welcome!

They join Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba in providing nationally-recognized unique identifiers for physicians. British Columbia and the Medical Council of Canada are in the testing phase of development.

It's important to note that issuance of a MINC number does not signal any status, certification or privilege for the individual; it only indicates that the person has had contact with the Canadian medical education or practice system.

in this issue ...

- **minc seen as key to the NCVA-PR**
- **implementation of minc in newfoundland**
- **minc board approves aggressive business plan**
- **minc and physician privacy**

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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minc board approves aggressive business plan

MINC will be moving forward aggressively in 2005-06, according to a business plan recently approved by the MINC Board.

Infrastructure issues like privacy, moving operations to Alberta and refining business processes occupied much of MINC's attention last year. But for the current year, there are two clear objectives: implementation in the remaining jurisdictions in Canada, and securing contracts with a strong cohort of Licensed Users.

Moving ahead with both goals concurrently allows MINC to get past the "chicken vs egg" discussion, of whether to

build supply or demand first. As a number of jurisdictions have already implemented MINC (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and soon the Medical Council of Canada), the initial push will be to identify potential Licensed Users who will find value in those areas.

Two other areas for MINC activity were identified, but given a lower priority for 2005-06: development of MINC-type identifiers for other health professions in Canada, and the expansion of MINC to provide identifiers for physicians in other countries.

minc and physician privacy

The issue of physicians' personal privacy is an important one, and has been central to the design of MINC and its operation from the beginning.

The MINC Privacy Policy has been developed to set out the sound and transparent rules under which MINC operates. That policy is available via the MINC website at www.minc-nimc.ca.

First, we have ensured a sound structure, by binding all organizations which participate in MINC to a common set of rules. MINC has signed agreements with all participating medical regulatory authorities, the MCC and all Licensed Users to supporting the Privacy Policy as well as all applicable privacy laws. This ensures a strong and common privacy framework for the collection, disclosure and use of personal information

Respect for physicians' privacy starts with an informed consent, which is obtained from each physician before their information is disclosed by a medical regulatory authority (or the MCC, as the case may be) to MINC requesting

issuance of a MINC number. That consent also includes acknowledgement that Licensed Users may have access to the physician's MINC number, for approved purposes.

Once a MINC number has been generated by MINC and sent back to the requesting regulatory authority, the physician is sent a document providing them with:

- a) their new MINC number;
- b) the elements of personal information disclosed to MINC to identify them;
- c) further information about MINC, its purposes and processes, and
- d) a contact name if they have any questions or concerns.

Experience with the 20,000 or so physicians who have been issued a MINC number so far has been very good, and few questions have been raised. In a handful of cases, physicians have contacted one of the regulatory authorities to indicate that a minor error had been made in the information sent to MINC, such as transposition of digits in a birthdate.



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Numéro d'identification médicale du Canada