“Listening to our Patient’s Concerns”

Comments on Bill C-54
(Personal Information Protection and Electronic Document Act)

Submission to the House of Commons
Standing Committee on Industry

March 18, 1999

[Redacted: further information redacted - see below for text]

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The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) offers the following comments on Bill C-54, the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Document Act.

CMA’s Approach

The CMA has consistently expressed concerns about the collection and use of health information. The CMA believes that patient confidentiality is a fundamental ethical principle that should be protected.

Specific Comments

1. Privacy Rights

   The CMA supports the right of patients to control the use of their personal health information. The Act should include provisions to ensure that patients are informed about how their personal health information is collected, used, and disclosed.

2. Consent

   The CMA believes that consent should be obtained from patients before their personal health information is collected, used, or disclosed. The Act should specify that consent is required for the use of personal health information for purposes other than those for which it was originally collected.

3. Access

   The CMA supports the right of patients to access their personal health information. The Act should provide for a mechanism to allow patients to request access to their personal health information.

4. Security

   The CMA believes that personal health information should be protected against unauthorized access. The Act should contain measures to ensure the security of personal health information.

5. Accountability

   The CMA supports the principle of accountability for the management of personal health information. The Act should require organizations to establish policies and procedures to ensure the protection of personal health information.

Conclusion

The CMA believes that the protection of personal health information is essential to the maintenance of patient confidentiality. The Act should be strengthened to ensure that patient confidentiality is adequately protected.

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