**Information Governance Program Charter**

***Introduction***

The value of information as an asset is essential for advancing the goals and priorities of an organization. Governance of clinical and operational information will provide a platform supporting improvements in quality, patient safety, and population health. Information governance allows the organization to support strategic initiatives with improvements in operational efficiency and effectiveness while reducing cost and managing risk. Information governance encompasses the people, processes, and technology required to create consistent and proper handling of information throughout the life cycle from data creation to archival while providing a framework that is irrespective of organizational structural boundaries.

A multidisciplinary council (Information Governance Council) will oversee information governance for the organization. This council is comprised of clinicians, information technology, privacy/security, regulatory, legal, health information management, finance, and population health professionals, and will provide subject matter expertise for the organization. The council will report activities to executive senior leadership who will have final authority when a consensus is not achieved within the council.

The council membership will oversee the program adhering to principles, core tenets, and membership responsibilities providing a solid foundation for ensuring the organization is able to sustain the vision and mission of the information governance program.

***Vision***

Information is a valued asset enabling operational excellence and evidence-based care for patients and preventive services to our communities.

***Objective***

To establish the leadership structures, policies, processes, and technologies to ensure that patient and other enterprise information sustains and extends the organization’s mission and goals, delivers value, complies with laws and regulations, and reflects good stewardship practices that minimize risk to stakeholders and advances the public good.

***Principles***

ARMA International:  Association of Records Managers and Administrators International’s generally accepted record keeping principles will be the foundation for the information governance program and have been adapted for use in the healthcare space by the American Health Information Management Association.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Principle** | **Description** |
| **Accountability** | A senior executive (or someone of comparable authority) shall oversee the information governance program and delegate responsibility for records and information management to the appropriate individuals. The organization adopts policies and procedures to guide personnel and ensure the program can be audited. |
| **Integrity** | Information generated by or managed for the organization has a reasonable and suitable guarantee of authenticity and reliability. |
| **Protection** | A reasonable level of protection for records and information that are private, confidential, privileged, secret, classified, or essential to business continuity or that otherwise require protection. |
| **Compliance** | Comply with all applicable laws and other binding authorities, as well as with the organization’s policies. |
| **Availability** | Maintain records and information in a manner that ensures timely, efficient, and accurate retrieval of needed information. |
| **Retention** | Maintain records and information for an appropriate time, considering legal, regulatory, fiscal, operational, and historical requirements. |
| **Disposition** | Secure and appropriate disposition for records and information that are no longer required to be maintained by applicable laws and the organization’s policies. |
| **Transparency** | Documentation of business processes and activities shall be documented in an open and verifiable manner, with documentation available to personnel and interested parties. |

***Core Tenets***

1. Coordinated decisions about information will be made for the benefit of the entire organization with consideration of information requirements and risk management.
2. Decisions will be made benefitting the overall organizations, maintaining sufficient independence from a division or department.
3. Advancement of a culture of ethical stewardship of patient information and all other clinical and business information.
4. Participation by all information stakeholders.
5. Objective based assessment of practices, requirements, risks, and opportunities.
6. Provision of direction and resources with accountability to provide assurance that program objectives are achieved.
7. Effective, timely, and consistent disposal of physical and electronic information that no longer needs to be retained will be a component of the program.
8. Decisions that require Children’s Health to reconcile conflicting laws or obligations will be done in good faith and give due respect to considerations such as privacy, data protection, security, information management, risk management, and sound business practices.
9. Reasonable measures to maintain the integrity and availability of long-term information assets throughout their intended life cycle will be taken.
10. Exploration of new technologies to leverage the power of technology in support of information governance.
11. Review of program periodically to ensure it continues to meet organizational needs.

***Information Governance Council Membership Responsibilities***

1. Create effective lines of accountability, responsibility, and authority for information life cycle governance functions.
2. Formalize ownership and information stewardship responsibilities.
3. Set priorities for strategically aligned initiatives to improve and ensure the value of information assets in relation to quality, efficiency, usability, interpretation, and compliance.
4. Appoint work groups as necessary to accomplish work efforts.
5. Maintain an up-to-date information asset inventory that identifies responsible owners and stewards.
6. Understand and promote the value of data assets.
7. Manage and resolve data-related issues, serve as the arbiter for reconciling conflicting information requirements including issues related to flow of data, data coordination, data definitions, data ownership, and authority.
8. Establish effective communication channels to ensure stakeholders are fully informed of current policies and practices and facilitate exchange of ideas that build continuous improvement with information governance.
9. Sponsor outreach and coaching on the value and proper management of information and training and support staff who interact with data and information including data capture, documentation, storage, analysis, compliance, and technical stewardship.
10. Define, approve, and communicate data strategies including: policies, standards, architecture, procedures, and metrics.
11. Provide oversight for policies, procedures, and performance standards for critical enterprise information management functions that reflect to the extent possible relevant standards and best practices, including:
    1. Data and information models, vocabularies, and definitions including enterprise master data and metadata
    2. Designated record sets and the legal health record
    3. Data quality management framework
    4. Records and information life cycle management including retention and disposition
    5. Release and disclosure of information
12. Sponsor, track, and oversee the delivery of data management projects and services.
13. Ensure comprehensive audit practices to identify opportunities to strengthen programs and achieve compliance with regulations and voluntary standards.
14. Track and enforce regulatory compliance and conformance to data policies, standards, architecture, and procedures.
15. Develop measures and metrics reflecting desired goals for information management.

*Source*: Children’s Health, Dallas. Used with permission.