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# President's Letter

May 10, 2011

## New confidentiality oaths raise concerns



**Patrick M. O'Shea**  
MD, CCFP, FCFP  
President

Dear Colleagues:

It has come to our attention that some regional health authorities are asking physicians to sign oaths of confidentiality in order to meet the requirements of the new Personal Health Information Act (PHIA), which was proclaimed last month. A President's Letter with more information on PHIA will be issued in the coming days.

Some of the health authorities have sought input from the NLMA prior to implementing the new confidentiality oaths or affirmations, and we are in the process of responding to them. Others have not.

We are concerned about the content of some of the confidentiality documents that physicians are being asked to sign, which refer to matters above and beyond PHIA and would restrict the physician's ability to act as an advocate for patients and for improved delivery of medical care services.

Therefore, we are advising all of our members not to sign any confidentiality oath or affirmation until the NLMA has reviewed and endorsed the wording.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at [president@nlma.nl.ca](mailto:president@nlma.nl.ca).

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. O'Shea". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Patrick M. O'Shea, MD, CCFP, FCFP  
President

The logo for the Newfoundland &amp; Labrador Medical Association (NLMA). It consists of the letters "NLMA" in a stylized, cursive font.

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