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## ELECTRONIC MAIL

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### Overview

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#### Purpose

Electronic mail (email) is a business communication tool within ADHB and this policy outlines use of email within ADHB

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#### Scope

This policy covers the use of non-clinically related email internally within ADHB and non-clinically related Internet email between ADHB and external organizations.

The policy covers:

- All ADHB employees
- Contractors
- Temporary staff or
- Anyone using ADHB resources for email.

In this policy staff means any of the above

Exclusion:

Use of email for exchange of clinical information is covered in the health information management policy (under development).

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#### Associated Documents

The table below indicates other documents associated with this policy.

Type	Document Titles
Board Policy	<a href="#">Internet Usage</a>
Service Level Agreement	Email
Forms	Change Request Form

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## ELECTRONIC MAIL

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### Electronic Mail Policy

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**Business Use Only** Email is provided as a business tool.

The excessive use of email by an individual **for non-business purposes** may result in that individual facing disciplinary measures and/or having their email account removed.

Factors relevant in determining whether usage is excessive include:

- The number of emails
  - Their size (including attachments)
  - Whether usage impacts upon staff carrying out their functions
  - The amount of ADHB resource expended
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**Unacceptable Use** Unacceptable use of email by an individual may result in that individual facing disciplinary measures and/or having their email account removed.

The following are examples of but not limited to unacceptable use of email within ADHB (which includes storage, sending or forwarding of unacceptable emails):

- Jokes or cartoon images
  - Sending chain letters
  - Personal Advertisements
  - Content that is considered inappropriate for the workplace
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**Illegal Content** ADHB has a zero tolerance policy for emails containing illegal content. Illegal content in an email by an individual may result in that individual facing disciplinary measures and/or having their email account removed.

The following are examples of but not limited to illegal content (which includes storage, sending or forwarding of emails):

- Pornographic images
  - Sexually explicit material, which could cause offense or distress to the recipient
  - Any other content which is sent with deliberate intent to insult/offend/cause distress to the recipient
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## ELECTRONIC MAIL

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### Electronic Mail Policy, Continued

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#### **Process to Handle Email with Illegal Content**

If you receive an email with illegal content, delete it immediately, and under no circumstances forward the email to anyone.

If you continue to receive email from the same person, reply to them requesting that they stop sending email of that nature to you.

If the person continues sending, advise the IS HelpDesk.

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#### **Using An Electronic Mail Account Assigned To Another Individual**

Staff must not use an electronic mail account assigned to another individual to either send or receive messages.

If there is need to read another's mail (while they are away on vacation for instance), message forwarding and other facilities must instead be used, unless prior permission has been granted i.e. PA to a Manager.

The process to gain access to another email account is through the Change Request Form to the IS HelpDesk. The Change Request Form is on the ADHB Intranet.

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#### **Use of External Email Accounts**

Accessing external email accounts through the ADHB internet connection is permitted. For example Xtra and Hotmail. Access is permitted on the condition that usage does not distract the user from duties they were employed for and does not violate the ADHB [Internet Usage](#) policy.

This policy applies to external email accounts accessed through the ADHB internet connection.

It is important that you do not forward your ADHB email to personal email addresses when you go on leave. This is because when these accounts reach their capacity, some providers send an automatic email to ADHB's mail server stating that the mail cannot be delivered. The ADHB server then attempts to route this message back to either the personal email address and the loop repeats itself.

This results in the ADHB Mail servers overloading.

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### Electronic Mail Policy, Continued

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#### Sender Contact Information Must Be Included In Electronic Mail

To facilitate communications and to properly identify the sending party, all electronic mail sent using ADHB's information systems must contain a signature block.

Signature block to include:

- The sender's first and last name
- Job title
- Organisational unit
- Telephone number

Signatures should be brief (two lines).

Do not add graphics or pictures to signatures as this increases the file size of the email.

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#### Confidentiality Statement

ADHB Legal have endorsed the following text for anyone wishing to use a Confidentially wording at the end of your email message.

*This message and any attachments contain information that is confidential. If you have received this message in error, please delete it and notify the sender immediately.*

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#### Global Email

The use of an email to all recipients on the global address book is limited for distribution by the following:

- Chief Executive
  - Director of Performance
  - Chief Information Officer
  - IS HelpDesk
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## ELECTRONIC MAIL

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### Electronic Mail Policy, Continued

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#### Viruses

The ADHB email system has virus protection that scans all incoming email for known virus signatures. The system also quarantines oversize email attachments and emails that may contain a virus.

There may be occasions when email is delivered that has come from a source not known to the recipient or contains suspicious attachments. The recipient should either delete the email or seek assistance from IS HelpDesk. Suspicious attachments must not be opened.

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#### Monitoring

Information Services reserves the right to monitor and inspect any email account or email traffic.

This includes monitoring email traffic for:

- Viruses
- Known malicious emails
- Other email traffic that may disrupt the integrity of the ADHB email environment.

If such a case occurs the email is:

- Quarantined and the sender and recipient notified or
  - Deleted with no notification.
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#### Email a Legal Document

In law emails are in many cases considered legal documents; accordingly they may be required to be disclosed to third parties under the Official Information Act or various other legal disclosure obligations. Consider the content to have the same legal effect as if it were written in a letter.

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#### Patient Information

Use of email for the exchange of patient information is covered in the Health Information policy (under development).

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## ELECTRONIC MAIL

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### Email Etiquette

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#### Scope

This section outlines recommended practices for good email etiquette to ensure email communication is effective.

The recommendations in this section are for both the receiver and the sender of the email and it is expected that the document will be used by those who receive emails to request adherence to the recommendations for good email etiquette by senders of non-compliant emails.

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#### Using Email

Although Email can be an effective communication tool, it cannot replace the richness of a phone or face to face conversation.

Before you use email, consider which is the best medium to use to provide the better experience and outcome:

- An email
- A phone call
- A face to face discussion

Avoid sending email to a group of people if you anticipate it will generate a discussion and many subsequent emails to the group. In this case a face to face meeting is probably more appropriate.

Also consider whether a more formal form of communication would be more appropriate e.g.:

- A letter
  - Agenda document
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#### To

The addresses in the 'To' are for the people you are directly addressing.

These are the people who need to read and understand the email and if appropriate, take action as a result of the email.

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## ELECTRONIC MAIL

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### Email Etiquette, Continued

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#### CC

The addresses in the 'Cc' are for the people you are indirectly addressing.

Only 'Cc' people that have an interest in the topic of the email; and if it is not imperative that they read the email; and if you are not expecting them to take action as a result of the email.

Avoid 'Cc-ing' to managers as a means of escalation unless absolutely necessary because it can be seen as an attempt to put pressure on the recipient and in the early stages of communication this may be offensive to some people

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#### Bcc

The use of the 'Bcc' is discouraged.

The addresses in the 'Bcc' are like 'Cc' except that the addresses in 'To' and 'Cc' do not know that the addresses in the 'Bcc' are included in the email conversation.

The 'To' and 'Cc' addresses are blind to the 'Bcc' addresses.

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#### Reply to All

Use the 'Reply to All' button with care.

Use of this button can generate many unwanted emails and be a cause of 'email fatigue' for the recipients.

Before using 'Reply to All', determine if:

- All of those on the reply list need to read your response
  - It can be sent to the original sender
  - It can be sent to a subset of the reply list
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#### Importance

Use the 'High Importance' flag sparingly.

Use of this flag is only useful if used when an email genuinely has higher importance than others.

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### Email Etiquette, Continued

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#### Email Subject

The subject line is important and often determines if your email will be read and actioned.

If used appropriately, the subject line can also be helpful to assist with archiving and retrieving old messages related to a particular topic.

Use a short, descriptive subject line.

Do not use generic subject lines such as “IMTS Information”.

It is also useful to suffix your subject line with an indication of the purpose of your email e.g.:

- Action Required
  - Information Only
  - Notification of Event
  - Urgent Notification (To be used sparingly)
  - Information Update
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#### Email Content

Avoid using email formats that contain graphics or any other formatting which increases the file size of the email.

If addressed to a single person, emails should be started with the name of the person, otherwise this is not required. A polite salutation such as ‘Kia Ora’, ‘Hi’ or ‘Dear’ can be used if desired.

Emails should be ended with a polite valediction (e.g. Regards, Thanks, Cheers) followed by your name.

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### Email Etiquette, Continued

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#### **Email Content,** Continued

An email should be about a single topic only to avoid any confusion in responses.

Write top down. Each new line should be less important than the line before. This ensures that the most important information is always read and is visible in the preview panel, if used.

Emails should be considered a memo rather than a letter and should therefore be short and concise. Long emails risk not being read fully and worse, ignored. If detailed explanations are required, email is probably not the right communication medium. A telephone or face-to-face conversation may be better.

If you want the recipient(s) of an email to take some action as a result of an email, clearly state this at the beginning of the email to ensure that this is read and understood.

If you are forwarding an email to someone ensure you provide an explanation as to why you are forwarding the email and what (if any) action you want them to take.

Use paragraphs and grammar to aid comprehension and use the spell checker before the email is sent.

If questions have been asked, put the answers next to the questions in the response.

Never write in anger or frustration. Keep in mind that emails can be forwarded to anyone within and outside of the organisation. If there is disagreement this should always be addressed with a face-to-face or telephone conversation. If appropriate a response of “Disagree – let’s discuss” can be used.

Avoid writing in all capitals or excessive use of exclamation marks as this is seen as shouting and is offensive to some people.

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### Email Etiquette, Continued

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#### Attachments

If you are sending out documents in a format that is not common to all users e.g. Visio diagrams, MS project Gantt charts etc, ensure that the recipient(s) is/are able to open and read these.

Avoid using non-essential pictures, logos or other graphics that unnecessarily increase the file size. Check the size of images you use and if necessary compress them to a smaller size. Contact the IMTS helpdesk or training team if you need assistance with this.

Avoid embedding documents within attached documents as these can be missed by the recipient. In general these should be attached as separate documents, or if embedding of documents cannot be avoided, the sender should alert the recipient that the attachment contains embedded documents.

Avoid using attachments when the content can also be distributed within the body of an email, for example short memos.

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#### Email Response

Email responses such as “Thanks”, “Will do”, or “OK” should be used sparingly.

As a general rule a response to an email should be to:

- Confirm an action has been taken
- Request or provide further information
- Contribute to a discussion.

If possible a negative response should be handled by a telephone or face-to-face conversation rather than email. This allows the responder to provide explanation and to discuss other options with the requestor and avoids management escalation and misunderstanding.

As a general rule, if an issue cannot be resolved with 2 exchanges of email then a conversation either by telephone or face-to-face should be initiated to avoid protracted and often frustrating email exchanges.

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