

Progent

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Managing a Paperless Clinic: A Global Approach to Digital Information

The question of how to manage a paperless clinic is a popular topic at the moment. Since there is more to paperless management than technology and software alone, it is worth painting an accurate picture of what exactly is involved in transitioning towards a paperless clinic.

Each step of the patient file management process generates information (dental or otherwise) that must be documented on digital media. Each step may involve completing one or more forms and having the patient sign them, creating and attaching images or adding notes to the file (your personal notes on an operative procedure, for example).

First key factor: Your digital management tools must allow you to capture a wide range of information in different ways, depending on the step in the process. However, you will not necessarily use all of the functionalities at the same time, but rather select the ones that align with your needs and your clinic management vision.

The software that you use is subject to the provisions of the Québec Act to Establish a Legal Framework for Information Technology (2001), the guidelines explained in your professional order's Guide to Using a Computer System for Keeping Patient Records (2006), and other requirements.

That being said, each dentist can choose the system that suits them when it comes to digital management of patient files. However, they should be able to demonstrate the efficiency of their process if they are called on to do so.

Second key factor: Computerizing the management of your patient files may lead to changes in some of your current practices. For example, an employee could end up completing a task and entering information that they were not previously responsible for. A smooth transition period is essential, so if you plan on digitizing your file management, you should consider the adjustments that might be required.

A standard patient file management process:

