

Prince of Wales Hospital announces loss of X-ray film copies incident

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Prince of Wales Hospital made the following announcement today (April 21) regarding an incident concerning a loss of X-ray film copies:

A Resident Trainee of the Department of Imaging and Interventional Radiology borrowed a box of teaching materials consisting of copies of patients' X-ray films from a Consultant on March 28. She intended to return the materials to the Consultant through the department secretary on April 8 but the secretary had left work when she called on her. She then left the box on the floor near the secretary's desk. On April 15, she asked the department secretary if the box had been returned to the Consultant and found out that the secretary had not received the box. The Resident Trainee then reported the incident to the Chief of Service. The materials contained 45 to 50 patients' X-ray film copies, some of which included patients' personal data, including names and Hong Kong identity card numbers.

An initial investigation revealed that a box which had been placed next to a rubbish bin was removed by contractor staff performing cleaning duties in the secretary's office on April 9. The hospital cannot confirm if the box contained the lost X-ray film copies. The hospital so far cannot locate the X-ray film copies after a thorough search in other hospital locations.

The X-ray film copies used for teaching purposes were taken before 2004. Patient service has not been affected by the incident.

The hospital is highly concerned about the incident and has reminded all departments on the safe custody and handling of patients' information. The department concerned will conduct a review on all X-ray copies kept for teaching purposes to ensure that they do not contain any personal data and arrangement of storage and handling of X-ray copies to avoid any similar occurrences.

The incident has been reported to Hospital Authority Head Office via the Advance Incident Reporting System, and to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data.