

SIROs and Caldicott Guardians

A number of questions have been raised about the roles of NHS SIROs and Caldicott Guardians. Whilst each NHS organisation is responsible for ensuring that it assigns responsibilities to the right people in the context of local structures and management arrangements, there are a number of differences and potential conflicts of interest between the roles of the SIRO and the Caldicott Guardian that suggest that they should normally remain distinct and separate.

At the same time there is clearly a need to ensure that the SIRO and any organisational IAOs work closely with the Caldicott Guardian and consult him/her where appropriate when conducting information risk reviews for assets which comprise or contain patient information. Organisations should consider whether the Caldicott Guardian should 'sign-off' information risk reviews in these circumstances.

The SIRO

- Is accountable
- Fosters a culture for protecting and using data
- Provides a focal point for managing information risks and incidents
- Is concerned with the management of all information assets

The Caldicott Guardian

- Is advisory
- Is the conscience of the organisation
- Provides a focal point for patient confidentiality & information sharing issues
- Is concerned with the management of patient information