

**Technology Support Guide**

**and**

**List of Support Vendors**

**For Members of the Delta Division of Family Practice**

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This document offers ideas for supporting your office information technology environment, including a list of technology vendors who can provide your office with support (non-EMR).

# Capturing Technology Information for Reference

A great first step in determining your technology support needs is to document information about your office technology. This can help to:

* Assist with selecting an appropriate technology support vendor,
* Support technology trouble-shooting, and reduced down-time, and
* Be used an inventory, in the event of fire, theft or equipment upgrades.

A good technology plan includes:

* An office map showing the location of computers, printers, switches, and data outlets (you can sketch and scan, or use a tool such as Microsoft Word).
* An inventory of technology equipment that captures system specifications, purchase and warranty information, etc. A sample template is provided in *Appendix A: Technology Documentation*, and a list of terms is provided in *Appendix B: Terms and Definitions.*
* A contact list of key staff and resources, which is useful to determine “who to talk to” about technology questions or problems. See *Appendix C: Contact List*, for a sample template.

# Choosing a Local Technology Vendor

Choosing a company to support your technology needs is partially a matter of business needs, and partially a matter of personal preference. Some of the questions you will want to ask about your own organization are:

* How many computers, printers, network devices and users are on our technology network?
* What is our in-house level of technology expertise?
* How often do we seem to have technology questions or problems?
* How fast do we need technology support?
* Do we need technology coverage past typical business hours?
* Should our technology support agreement with a vendor include physicians who work from home?
* Are any changes planned for our office in the coming years (hiring new staff, retirements, etc.)?

Some of the questions that you may want to ask of a potential technology vendor are:

* What are your service rates, and what are terms of agreement?
* What kind of coverage do you provide (typical response time, weekday, after-hours, weekend)?
* How do you provide coverage (over the phone, remote desktop, on site)?
* Which hardware products (computers, printers, etc.) do you support?
* Do you sell, and am I required to buy, computer equipment and supplies from you?
* Do you have experience with technology in medical practices?
* Is your company bonded, and will your staff be willing to sign non-disclosure agreements in case they see or encounter patient data while resolving a problem?
* How frequently do you bill, and will I see a detailed list of all the support services provided?
* Do you have any client references in our field that I may speak to regarding the support you have provided to them?

# Vendor List

The following companies may be able to provide IT support services to your office or practice. Some of these companies are listed here because we heard from some GP practices that they were satisfied with the company’s services; other companies on this list have previous experience working with some BC EMR vendors. These are recommendations and not endorsements. Please do your research to find out which company would be most appropriate to provide support to your office.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Delta Geeks**  1208 - 56 Street, Tsawwassen  604.943.8318  deltageeks.net | **Express Computers**  Unit #28, 3033 King George Hwy., Surrey  604.535.6508  expresscomputers.com |
| **Gennix**  Suite 225, 20353 - 64 Ave, Langley  604.534.9161  www.gennix.ca | **Innovation networks**  230-3771 Jacombs Road, Richmond  604.275.5100  innovationnetworks.com |
| **Level 4**  #102, 18663 - 52 Avenue, Surrey  604.576.9522 Toll Free: 1.800.318.2495  Level4.net | **Logical Developments**  301 - 1110 Hamilton Street, Vancouver  604.669.8400 Toll Free: 1.888.4-LOGDEV www.logdev.com |
| **SupportLINK Systems Inc.**  2405 Pine Street, Vancouver  604.221.8200  [www.supportlink.ca](http://www.supportlink.ca) |  |

# Appendix A: Technology Documentation

The following tables can be used to record the most basic information regarding your technology infrastructure.

**Computers:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: |  |
| Make: |  |
| Model: |  |
| Location: |  |
| Used for: |  |
| Notes: |  |

(Copy, paste and complete this table for each computer, laptop or tablet in your office)

**Software:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: |  |
| Vendor |  |
| Installed: |  |
| Used for: |  |
| Licenses: |  |
| Notes: |  |

(Copy, paste and complete this table for all software applications installed in your office)

**Printers:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Make: |  |
| Model: |  |
| Location: |  |
| Notes: |  |

(Copy, paste and complete this table for each Printer or printing device - such as a labeller -in your office)

**Other Devices**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Description |  |
| Make: |  |
| Model: |  |
| Location: |  |
| Used for: |  |
| Notes: |  |

(Copy, paste and complete this table for any other technology device – such as a scanner - in your office)

# Appendix B: Terms and Definitions

**Computer**: Any desktop, laptop or tablet computing device.

**Local Area Network (LAN)**: All the devices that are connected together on your network – via both wired and wireless connections - form a LAN.

**Network:**  In general, the term “network” refers to a collection of computing devices, printers, etc., that are electronically connected via either a wired or wireless medium.

**Peripheral Device**: Any device that directly connects to a computer, such as a mouse, keyboard, joystick, web-camera, microphone, headset or electronic writing pad.

**Printer:** Any device that produces “hard-copy” documents. This includes an office printer, a label maker, or a “tractor feed” dot-matrix printer that produces carbon copy documents.

**Router/Modem:**  Switches and WAP’s connect the devices within the walls of your office. If you want to get access to the Internet or possibly the EMR, you need a router or modem. A router / modem therefore controls network communication between your office and the outside world. If no-one in your office can connect to the internet, it may be because there is a problem with your router / modem.

**Scanner**: A device that allows you to make an electronic copy of a document, and save it as an electronic file to a computer.

**Server:** A powerful computer that helps support office activities but is not necessarily used by a person (for example, a file server hosts electronic files that everyone in the office can access; a print server hosts the print queues that everyone uses for printing, etc.)

**Software:**  Any application, such as an office productivity suite (Microsoft Word or Excel), anti-virus protection, etc., that runs on either a server or workstation device.

**Switch**: A switch is an electronic data communication device that inter-connects all the devices on a network via wired connections (almost always a Category 5 or 6 Ethernet cable).

**Wireless Access Point**: The wireless access point (or WAP) is an electronic communication device that connects computers and network devices together via wireless signals.

**Workstation:** A computer that is regularly used for daily office activities.

# Appendix C: Contact List.

Creating a contact list for your technology support is useful to determining “who to talk to” about technology questions or problems. This might include the following contacts:

**In-office technology coordinator / “Power User”.** If there is a “power user” in your office who has better-than-average knowledge of technology or your EMR and is willing to support other staff members, you may want to contact them first. If you don’t have a power-user, it may be useful to see if someone is interested in taking on this responsibility. Otherwise, you may just want to have a central person (e.g., the office manager, lead MOA) as your “central point of contact”.

**Your EMR vendor.** If you have a problem with your core EMR software and your in-office technology coordinator cannot seem to resolve the problem or question, call the EMR vendor. Most EMR vendors can provide remote support, and they also have internal escalation procedures for difficult problems.

**Your IT Service / Support Company.**  It may be obvious that a technology problem has nothing to do with the vendor. For example, if your monitor won’t turn on, or your keyboard is broken, your EMR vendor probably can’t help you out. In such cases, contact the IT Company or professional that supports your office.

**Doctors of BC, Technical Service and Support.** If you contact your EMR vendor and your IT support company and you STILL have a persisting problem, you may wish to contact the Doctors of BC Technology Service and Support Organization. TSS provides may be able to provide support or guidance on difficult problems that aren’t getting resolved.

**Contact List:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Support level** | **Primary Contact** | | **Secondary Contact** | | **Notes** |
| **Name** | **Phone** | **Name** | **Phone** |
| **Power-user** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **EMR Vendor** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **IT service / support company** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Doctors of BC Technical Service and Support** |  | 604-638-5841 |  |  | Email: [tsstechsupport@doctorsofbc.ca](mailto:tsstechsupport@doctorsofbc.ca)  Website: www.psptgbc.ca/support/tss |