

Pharmaceutical and healthcare organisations have intensified their focus on privacy, security and information risk management within the last several years to avoid regulatory risk and to use personal information for competitive advantage. The main factors contributing to this heightened awareness include:

- New laws regarding the collection and use of consumer, healthcare and employee information
- Increased use of electronic health records and the control and regulatory requirements governing access to critical health and clinical research data that frequently must cross national borders
- Increased interaction between healthcare and pharmaceutical companies, healthcare professionals, pharmacists and patients
- Increased use of vendors, outsourcers and other third parties
- European Union and global data protection directive requirements for security and privacy

## How can pharmaceutical and life sciences companies provide for privacy and data protection in an internet enabled age?

Recent media focus on incidents of privacy violations, identity theft and personal information mismanagement have increased regulatory and consumer pressure to prevent the disclosure or compromise of sensitive information. As a result, healthcare and pharmaceutical companies face unique challenges as they develop a strong privacy culture that ensures information security without impeding the necessary exchange of patient care information. It is imperative that companies address these global data-protection and privacy issues in a cost-effective manner to maintain a competitive edge amid the increasing regulatory and consumer demands for data protection.

Failure to implement appropriate privacy and data-protection safeguards could have significant impacts, and has elevated the issues of privacy, security and information risk management to the board and senior executive levels. Organisations must now include privacy, security and information risk management concerns in their strategic planning process to avoid significant consequences, including:

*Legal sanctions, fines and penalties instituted by government agencies*

*Reputation risks and class action law suits*

*Loss of trust and competitive advantage*

*Disruption of marketing and research activities*

*Prolonged investigation or cessation of international data transfer*

Additionally, many companies strive to realise competitive advantages by establishing privacy and data protection frameworks. These frameworks enable one-to-one healthcare interactions and achieve heightened trust and loyalty within the requirements of regulations and baseline control objectives.

### How can PwC help your organisation?

PwC can help you develop an integrated privacy, security and information risk management framework within your organisation. We work with you to assess the current environment; prioritise, develop and implement solutions to address key risks; and design and implement training, monitoring, auditing and other ongoing processes. Working with you, we can raise awareness on matters related to privacy, security and information risk management within your organisation. PwC offers a wide range of privacy and data protection services to the pharmaceutical, life sciences and healthcare industry including:

*Awareness training programmes and reporting of key risks at the board, executive management and task force level*

*Performance of integrated or individual privacy and security assessments*

*Inventory and mapping of the business processes that involve high-risk data elements throughout the data lifecycle*

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*Identity theft vulnerability and prevention assessments, as well as ethical hacking and social engineering testing*

*Implementation of 'better practice' privacy, security and information risk management programmes*

*Creation of policies and procedures for clinical data de-identification and handling, channel-specific marketing activities and employee and contractor data*

*Creation of a vendor privacy and security oversight programme with contractual safeguards, manual or automated pre-contract risk-based assessments and ongoing auditing programme*

*Development of a global data protection strategy and compliance programme, including Safe Harbor Certification, model contract and Binding Corporate Rules*

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## **Global Pharmaceutical and Life Sciences Industry Group**

The Global Pharmaceutical and Life Sciences Industry Group at PwC is dedicated to delivering effective solutions to the complex business challenges facing pharmaceutical and life sciences companies. A global leader in serving the pharmaceutical and life sciences industry PwC has extensive experience working with companies on industry-specific strategic, operational, and financial issues. Our expertise includes assurance, tax and advisory services, as well as specialised capabilities in regulatory compliance, risk management, performance improvement and transaction support. In helping our clients, we draw on the full knowledge and skills of PwC's professionals. More than 161,000 people in 154 countries connect their thinking, experience and solutions to build public trust and enhance value for clients and their stakeholders.