

Our Information Practices at the Niagara Health System

Collection of Personal Health Information

We collect personal health information (PHI) about you directly from you or from the person acting on your behalf.

The personal health information that we collect may include, for example, your name, date of birth, address, health history, records of your visits to the Niagara Health System (NHS) and the care that you received during those visits.

Occasionally, we collect personal health information about you from other sources, if we have obtained your consent to do so or if the law permits. (Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 PHIPA).

Uses and Disclosures of Your Personal Health Information

We use and disclose your personal health information to:

- Treat and care for you
- Get payment for your treatment and care from OHIP, WSIB, your private insurer or others
- Plan, administer and manage our internal operations
- Conduct risk management activities
- Conduct quality improvement activities
- Compile statistics
- Fundraise to improve our health care services and programs
- Teach
- Notify a representative of a religious or other organization to visit you during your stay
- Confirm you are a patient, your general health status, your room number and telephone extension while in hospital
- Locate you, or your family in urgent/emergent situations using an overhead paging system.
- Facilitate the Federal and Provincial governments' goal of providing Canadians with an electronic health record. This will improve patient safety, reduce wait times, avoid duplicate testing and enhance timely access to your health information by your health care providers. As these systems become established, your Niagara Health System information will be stored securely on shared health information databases, accessible to authorized individuals.

Your Choices

You may withdraw your consent for the following uses and disclosures:

- Fundraising
- Teaching
- Confirmation of your in/outpatient status
- Religious representative notification
- Patient satisfaction surveys
- Some Federal/Provincial electronic health information systems

You may access and correct your personal health records. Please contact us for more information on accessing, correcting or withdrawing consent for your PHI.

Prescribed entities include:

- Cancer Care Ontario (CCO);
- Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI);
- Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES); and
- Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario (POGO).

Important Information

- We take steps to protect your personal health information from theft, loss and unauthorized access, copying, modification, use, disclosure and disposal.
- We conduct audits and complete investigations to monitor and manage our privacy compliance.
- We obtain your consent before we disclose your information for REB approved research projects.

Note: some research projects DO NOT require your consent and have safeguards in place to protect your privacy. We may use your PHI without your consent for education, training, planning and management of the NHS. We may provide your PHI to certain 'prescribed entities' allowed under PHIPA for planning and managing our healthcare system.

How to Contact Us

For more information about NHS privacy protection practices, or to raise a concern you have with our practices, contact us:

**Chief Privacy Officer
Niagara Health System
St. Catharines General Site
142 Queenston Street
St. Catharines, ON L2R 7C6
Tel: (905) 378-4647 ext. 44475**

You have the right to contact the Information and Privacy Commissioner/Ontario, if you think your privacy rights have been violated.

The Commissioner may be reached at:

**Information and Privacy Commissioner/Ontario
2 Bloor St. East, Suite 1400
Toronto, Ontario M4W 1A8
Tel: (416) 326-3948. or 1 (800) 387-0073
e-mail: info@ipc.on.ca
IPC website: www.ipc.on.ca**