



## **Privacy Statement and Policies Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act**

Our Privacy Policies comply with the provisions of Canada's Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA).

### **We and our staff:**

- \* Protect the confidentiality of any health information we access in the course of providing you with care,
- \* Collect, use and disclose health information only for the purposes of providing you with care,
- \* Adhere to the privacy and security policies and procedures of this office
- \* Attend privacy and security training sessions.

### **Record retention and disposal**

#### Retention of records

We retain patient records as required by law and regulations. For example, after the last entry has been made in the patient record, we are required to keep it for a further 10 years.

#### Disposal of records

We destroy our records in a way that protects patient privacy in accordance with regulations. We use a supervised shredding method of destruction.

### **Patient access to records and copies**

Patient requests for access to the medical record can be made verbally or in writing. After receiving the request, we will provide you with an estimate that reflects the cost of photocopying and staff time. The physician will review the record with those staff entrusted with this task. We will only refuse access to medical records in extremely limited circumstances. For example, when the information could reasonably be expected to seriously endanger the mental or physical health or safety of the individual making the request or another person. Or if disclosure of the information would reveal personal health information about another person who has not consented to the disclosure. In this case, we will do our best to separate out this information and disclose only what we can. If you only wish to view the original record, one of our staff must be present to maintain the integrity of the record.

Communications policy (telephone, fax, e-mail, courier) We are sensitive to the privacy of your health information and this is reflected in how we communicate with both you and others involved in your care. We protect personal health information regardless of the format.

**Telephone:** Your preference with regards to phone messages will be taken into consideration. Unless you indicate otherwise, we will only leave our name and phone number on any message for you.

**Fax:** Our fax machines are located in a secure area. All transmissions are sent with a cover sheet that indicates the information is confidential. We take reasonable steps to ensure that health information is received only by a secure fax machine.

**E-mail:** Any confidential information that we send via email over public or external networks is encrypted. We employ a firewall and virus scanning software to mitigate against unauthorized modification, loss, access or disclosure.

**Post/Courier:** When health information is transferred to another location, it is placed in a sealed envelope, marked as confidential, and directed to the attention of the authorized recipient. The health information has been encrypted and placed under a lock box that can only be opened with a code. A patient who believes that this office has not replied to their access request or handled their health information in a reasonable manner is urged to address their concerns first with their doctor. A patient



might also choose to make a complaint to the Ontario Medical Association and the Ontario Privacy Commissioner.