Protecting

YOUR PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION

Under The Personal Health Information Act

What Is the Personal Health Information Act?

The Personal Health Information Act (PHIA) is a provincial law that governs the collection, use, disclosure, retention, disposal, and destruction of your personal health information. It aims to balance your right to have your personal health information protected with the need of health professionals to use your information to provide you with proper care and treatment.

What Is Personal Health Information?

Personal health information is information about you that is related to your health or health care. It may include:

- your name, date of birth, and address
- information about your mental health or physical health and that of family members if relevant
- information about tests, procedures, and care you received

The psychologists in our practice collect personal health information directly from you or from the person acting on your behalf. Sometimes, we ask other health professionals or health care organizations involved in your health care for your personal health information to help us provide you with care. We may collect personal health information from other sources if we have your permission to do so or if the law allows or requires us to do so even without your permission. Personal health information may be collected and stored in different ways, including electronic files, paper files, and images such as digital photographs. We collect personal health information as needed to treat you and assist with your health care.

Who Can See or Use Your Personal Health Information?

- individuals involved in your care and treatment on a need-to-know basis (including students)
- individuals who need your information in relation to payments (e.g., insurance companies)
- anyone who can legally act on your behalf
- specified organizations who have a legal right to see the information in certain situations

How does PHIA protect your personal health information?

We have policies and practices to protect your personal health information. We will:

- properly collect, use, share, keep, and destroy your personal health information following the rules in PHIA
- have a privacy contact person who can answer your questions about our handling of your personal health information
- have policies to protect the privacy and security of your personal health information on paper, in electronic form, or unrecorded
- have a complaints policy for you to use if you believe that we are not following the rules in PHIA
- properly respond if the privacy of your personal health information has been breached. This may include telling you or the Privacy Review Officer.

What Are Your Rights Under PHIA?

- to ask for copies of your personal health information (fees may apply)
- to ask for changes to your personal health information if the facts were recorded incorrectly
- to ask for information on who has looked at your personal health information held in electronic form
- to ask that some or all of your personal health information not be collected by, used by, or shared with specific people or organizations involved in your care
- to ask for a review by the Privacy Review Officer responsible for PHIA if you do not think the result of your complaint, access request, or correction request properly followed the rules in PHIA

Who Do I Contact for More Information?

This is a summary of your rights and our responsibilities under PHIA. There are specific exceptions to these rights and responsibilities.

If you need more information, please ask our PHIA contact person:

Dr. Robert J. McInerney
Armdale Professional Building
2625 Joseph Howe Drive, Suite 15
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 4G4
Tel: (902) 266-8311 Fax: 1-866-380-6621

For general information on PHIA, visit the NS Department of Health and Wellness website: www.novascotia.ca/DHW/PHIA
or reach the DHW PHIA contact at **1-902-424-5419**, toll-free at **1-855-640-4765** or by **email at phia@gov.ns.ca**