



Your Privacy at CMHA WW

Understanding Your Personal Health Information and Privacy Rights



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Waterloo Wellington

Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale
Waterloo Wellington

■ Why is my information being collected?

Your personal health information (PHI) is primarily used to paint the picture of your overall health so that your care providers can give you better care. Sharing your PHI by mail, fax and electronically with other service providers is important. The information shared with the members of your community care team allows them to have the most up-to-date information about you so they can better and more safely meet your needs.

■ What is included in my personal health information?

Your personal health information file includes information on your :

- mental health
- physical health
- health history
- personal history
- relevant family medical history

■ How is my personal health information being protected?

CMHA WWJD complies with Ontario's health privacy standards. Your PHI can only be used by authorized staff providing you with health care support and services.

Your care providers are required to have administrative, physical and technical safeguards to protect their physical records and their electronic networks from misuse, correction, copying, disclosure, destruction, monitoring and/or damage. These safeguards include security software and encryption protocols, firewalls, locks and other access controls, privacy impact assessments, privacy training for staff and students, and confidentiality agreements. Privacy and security safeguards are constantly under review and are enhanced where necessary to ensure the highest level of protection.

■ Are there times when my personal health information is shared without my express consent?

Yes – there are times when your health care providers are required to share your personal health information without your express consent. For example, if you are at risk of harm to self or others, we may need to share need-to-know information to keep you safe. Your health care providers are also obligated by law to respond to a subpoena and/or search warrant. Anonymous demographic and statistical data may also be used for the purposes of program and funding evaluation.

Do you have questions or concerns about your privacy at CMHA WW?

If so, please do not hesitate to contact our privacy and risk officer, Anna Tersigni.

She can be reached through email at: atersigni@cmhaww.ca

Or you can call:
1-844-CMHA WW3 ext. 2011

Can my PHI be shared with third parties that are not health care providers?

Your health care provider requires your express consent to share your PHI with third parties. You can request copies of parts and/or all of your health record for purposes other than healthcare, such as your lawyer, or an application for short or long term disability.

What are my privacy rights?

You have the right to request a copy of your clinical file by contacting your health service provider. You also have the right to request a correction or amendment to your PHI. You have the right to block all or parts of your clinical file to designated recipients. You may log a complaint if you feel that your service provider has not addressed your privacy concern correctly.



■ Why are my assessments shared in a centralized electronic assessment system?

Having your health information in an electronic format allows your authorized health care providers to quickly and securely access your health history, no matter where you receive care. Since the other health service providers involved in your care have a better picture of your assessments, they will be able to provide you with better care.

A centralized electronic sharing system is used to share your assessment data with community health service providers who need to review the assessment data in order to provide services to you. If you have concerns regarding the privacy and security of your personal health information, you may contact your health service provider's Privacy Officer. If you wish to consent or withhold your consent to the sharing of your assessments in the electronic sharing system you may contact the Consent Call Centre at 1-855-585-5279 or TTY (1-855-973-4445).

■ What does it mean when I give my consent to share my personal health information within my circle of care?

When you give your consent, your assessment record will be uploaded onto a secure and centralized electronic assessment system. Your care providers will use the information in your assessment to provide you with the safe, quality care that better meets your needs. You have the right to be informed of the positive and negative consequences of your consent to share (or not to share) your personal health information with health service providers involved in your care.