

Owen Sound Family Health Team Privacy Policy

Commitment to Privacy

Protecting your privacy and the confidentiality of your personal information has always been an important aspect of the Owen Sound Family Health Team (OSFHT) operations. The appropriate collection, use and disclosure of patients' personal health information is fundamental to our day-to-day operations and to your care. We strive to provide you with excellent medical care and service, which includes treating your personal information with respect. Each member and employee of the practice must abide by our commitment to privacy in the handling of personal information.

Applicability of This Privacy Policy

Our Privacy Policy informs you of our commitment to privacy and tells you the ways we ensure that your privacy is protected. Our Privacy Policy applies to protect the personal health information of all our patients that is in our possession and control.

What is Personal Health Information?

Personal health information means identifying information about an individual relating to their physical or mental health (including medical history), the providing of health care to the individual, payments or eligibility for health care, organ and tissue donation and health number.

The 10 Principles of Privacy

Our Privacy Policy reflects our compliance with fair information practices, applicable laws and standards of practice.

1. Accountability

We take our commitment to securing your privacy very seriously. Each physician and employee associated with the OSFHT is responsible for the personal information under his/her control. Our employees are informed about the importance of privacy and receive information periodically to update them about our Privacy Policy and related issues. In addition to establishing this Privacy Policy, we have appointed our Executive Director as the person responsible for all privacy matters.

2. Identifying Purposes: Why We Collect Information

We ask you for information to establish a relationship and serve your medical needs. We obtain most of our information about you directly from you, or from other health practitioners whom you have seen and authorized to disclose to us. You are entitled to know how we use your information and this is described in the Privacy Statement posted at the end of this document. We will limit the information we collect to what we need for those purposes, and we will use it only for those purposes. We will obtain your consent if we wish to use your information for any other purpose.

3. Consent

You have the right to determine how your personal health information is used and disclosed. For most health care purposes, your consent is implied as a result of your consent to treatment, however, in some circumstances your express, sometimes written, consent may be required.

4. Limiting Collection

We collect information by fair and lawful means and collect only that information which may be necessary for purposes related to the provision of your medical care.

5. Limiting Use, Disclosure and Retention

The information we request from you is used for the purposes defined. We will seek your consent before using the information for purposes beyond the scope of the posted Privacy Statement. Under no circumstances do we sell patient lists or other personal information to third parties. There are some types of disclosure of your personal health information that may occur as part of the OSFHT fulfilling its routine obligations and/or clinical management. This includes consultants and suppliers to the FHT, on the understanding that they abide by our Privacy Policy, and only to the extent necessary to allow them to provide business services or support to this FHT. We will retain your information only for the time it is required for the purposes we describe and once your personal information is no longer required, it will be destroyed. However, due to our ongoing exposure to potential claims, some information is kept for a longer period. Medical records are kept for at least 10 years.

6. Accuracy

We endeavour to ensure that all decisions involving your personal information are based upon accurate and timely information. While we will do our best to base our decisions on accurate information, we rely on you to disclose all material information and to inform us of any relevant changes.

7. Safeguards: Protecting Your Information

We protect your information with appropriate safeguards and security measures. The OSFHT maintains personal information in a combination of paper and electronic files. Access to personal information will be authorized only for the physicians and employees associated with the OSFHT, and other agents who require access in the performance of their duties, and to those otherwise authorized by law. We provide information to health care providers acting on your behalf, on the understanding that they are also bound by law and ethics to safeguard your privacy. Other organizations and agents must agree to abide by our Privacy Policy and may be asked to sign contracts to that effect.

We will give them only the information necessary to perform the services for which they are engaged, and will require that they not store, use or disclose the information for purposes other than to carry out those services. Our computer systems are password-secured and constructed in such a way that only authorized individuals can access secure systems and databases.

At this time, we do not use email to communicate to patients or other providers about your healthcare needs. Our website www.osfht.ca provides a secure portal for you to request an appointment and communicate with our reception staff for this purpose.

8. Openness: Keeping You Informed

The OSFHT has prepared this plain-language Privacy Policy to keep you informed. You may ask to receive a copy of it from any of the front desk receptionists. If you have any additional questions or concerns about privacy, we invite you to contact us and we will address your concerns to the best of our ability. OSFHT Privacy Policy updated December 2016

9. Access and Correction

With limited exceptions, we will give you access to the information we retain about you within a reasonable time, upon presentation of a written request and satisfactory identification. We may charge you a fee for this service and if so, we will give you notice in advance of processing your request. If you find errors of fact in your personal health information, please notify us as soon as possible and we will make the appropriate corrections. We are not required to correct information relating to clinical observations or opinions made in good faith. You have a right to append a short statement of disagreement to your record if we refuse to make a requested change. If we deny your request for access to your personal information, we will advise you in writing of the reason for the refusal and you may then challenge our decision.

10. Challenging Compliance

We encourage you to contact us with any questions or concerns you might have about your privacy or our Privacy Policy. We will investigate and respond to your concerns about any aspect of our handling of your information. In most cases, an issue is resolved simply by telling us about it and discussing it. You can reach us at:

**Owen Sound Family Health Team
1415 1st Ave East Suite 2000,
Owen Sound, ON
N4K 4K8
519-470-3030**

Email us at: privacy@osfht.ca

If, after contacting us, you feel that your concerns have not been addressed to your satisfaction, we will provide information on other complaint procedures that may be available to you.

Conclusion

Any changes to our Privacy Policy shall be acknowledged in this Privacy Policy in a timely manner.

OWEN SOUND FAMILY HEALTH TEAM

STATEMENT OF INFORMATION PRACTICES

Collection of Personal Health Information

We collect personal health information about you directly from you or from the person acting on your behalf. Your request for care implies consent for our collection, use and disclosure of your personal health information for purposes related to your care. All other purposes requires your express consent.

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 clinic and the care that you received during those visits.

Uses and Disclosures of 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 (such as sending patients satisfaction surveys);
- teach;
- perform research;
- compile statistics;
- comply with legal and regulatory requirements; and
- fulfill other purposes permitted or required by law.

Your Choices:

You may access and correct your personal health records, or withdraw your consent for some of the above uses and disclosures by contacting us (subject to legal exceptions).

How to Contact Us:

Our privacy contact person is our Executive Director.

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

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 take steps to ensure that everyone who performs services for us protects your privacy and only will use your personal health information for the purposes you have consented to.

Owen Sound Family Health Team
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You have the right to complain to the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario if you think we have violated your rights.

The Commissioner can be reached at:
1-800-387-0073 www.ipc.on.ca