

Administrative Policy Manual

Title: Privacy Principles

Women's College Hospital		Policy No:	1.20.001
Title	Privacy Principles	Original: (mm/dd/yyyy)	09/2010
Category	Administrative	Reviewed: (mm/dd/yyyy)	03/9/2016
Sub-category	Privacy and Information Security	Revised: (mm/dd/yyyy)	01/10/2013 01/13/2015
Issued by:	Privacy Office		
Approved by:	Executive Team		

Women's College Hospital Intranet document is considered the most current.

Policy Statement:

Women's College Hospital (WCH) is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of the personal health information (PHI) in our custody and control. Anyone who collects, uses, discloses, retains or destroys personal health information on WCH's behalf is required to follow these ten information principles. All WCH policies and procedures relating to the collection, use, disclosure, retention, protection and destruction of personal health information are developed in consideration of these ten principles.

Principle 1 – Accountability

Women's College Hospital (WCH) is responsible for the personal health information in our custody or control, and has designated an individual, the Manager of Privacy, to act as our contact person. The Manager of Privacy is responsible to oversee and facilitate WCH's Privacy Policies and privacy compliance activities.

Principle 2 – Identifying Purposes

Prior to collecting personal health information all care providers should identify to the individual from whom they collect personal health information the purposes for the collection and should only collect as much personal health information as is required for the purpose.

WCH collects personal health information for purposes related to direct patient care, administration and management of WCH programs and services, patient billing, administration and management of the health care system, research, teaching, statistical reporting, fundraising, and as permitted or required by law.

When personal health information that has been collected is to be used for a purpose not previously identified, the consent of the patient must be obtained prior to the new use; unless the new purpose is permitted or required by law.

Principle 3 – Consent

WCH care providers and members of the circle of care may generally rely on implied consent from our patients for the collection, use, or disclosure of personal health information.

An individual may withdraw consent for the use or disclosure of his/her PHI at any time, but the withdrawal cannot be retroactive. The withdrawal may also be subject to legal or contractual restrictions and reasonable notice.

Principle 4 – Limiting Collection

WCH care providers must limit the amount and type of personal health information they collect to that which is necessary to fulfill the purposes identified. Information should be collected directly from the individual, unless the law permits or requires collection from third parties.

Principle 5 – Limiting Use and Disclosure

WCH care providers must use and disclose personal health information only for permitted purposes: for direct patient care, administration and management of WCH programs and services, patient billing, administration and management of the health care system, research, teaching, statistical reporting, fundraising and as permitted or required by law.

Personal health information must be retained in accordance with the WCH record retention policy, and as required by law.

Principle 6 – Accuracy

WCH will take reasonable steps to ensure that the information and personal health information that we use is accurate, complete and up-to-date as is necessary for the purpose for which we use the information..

Principle 7 – Safeguards

WCH has implemented security safeguards for the protection of personal health information we hold, which includes:

- Physical measures (such as locked filing cabinets);
- Administrative measures (policies, procedures and guidelines), and
- Technological measures (such as the use of passwords, encryption and audit trails).

WCH requires anyone who collects, uses or discloses personal health information on our behalf to be aware of the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of personal health information. This is done through the signing of confidentiality agreements, privacy training and through contractual means.

Principle 8 – Openness

Information about WCH's policies and practices relating to the management of personal health information are available on the hospital website, in patient handbooks and are posted in strategic locations throughout the hospital and include

- Contact information for the Manager of Privacy, to whom complaints or inquiries can be made;
- Policies and procedures;

Principle 9 – Access

Individuals may make written requests to have access to their records of personal health information. If, after having access to their PHI an individual would like to request correction to his/her PHI, they should contact the WCH Privacy Office to submit their request.

Principle 10 – Challenging Compliance

An individual may address a challenge concerning compliance with this policy to the Privacy Office, at 416-323-7702 or by e-mail at privacy@wchospital.ca. If a complaint or concern is not adequately addressed by the WCH Privacy Office, the individual should contact the Office of the Information and Privacy Commission of Ontario at 416-326-3333 or www.ipc.on.ca Email: infor@ipc.on.ca

References:

Personal Health Information Protection Act, R.S.O. 2004, c.3.
Canadian Standards Association Model Code for the Protection of Personal Information