



# PRIVACY POLICY & PROCEDURES

UPDATED MARCH, 31st 2021

## PURPOSE

Protecting the privacy and confidentiality of personal information is an important aspect of the way **Eramosa Physiotherapy Associates hereinafter known as EPA** conducts its business. Collecting, using, and disclosing personal information in an appropriate, responsible, and ethical manner is fundamental to **EPA** daily operations.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to **EPA**, employers, managers and employees.

## POLICY STATEMENT

As a physiotherapy clinic, we collect, use and disclose personal information in order to serve our clients. Our primary purpose for the collections of information is to provide the best possible physiotherapy treatment. For example, we may collect your past health history, your family's health history and your current physical condition to help us assess your personal health needs. Consent may also be needed so diagnostic tests may be obtained to provide more information on your health.

Eramosa Physiotherapy is the sole owner of your information. It is not shared or sold to other organizations.

## DEFINITIONS

<b>Personal information</b>	Is defined as any identifying information about an individual or group of individuals, including name, date of birth, address, phone number, e-mail address, social insurance/security number, nationality, gender, health history, financial data, credit card numbers, bank account numbers, assets, debts, liabilities, payment records, credit records, loan records, opinions, and personal views
<b>Consent</b>	Occurs and is obtained when an individual signs an application or other form containing personal information, thereby authorizing <b>EPA</b> to collect, use, and disclose the individual's personal information for the purposes stated on the form or in the Appropriate Use section of this policy.
<b>Implied consent</b>	Is granted by the individual when he/she signs the application or form. This allows <b>EPA</b> to obtain or verify information from third parties (such as banks, credit bureaus, lenders, or insurance companies) in the process of assessing the eligibility of an individual, customer, client, job applicant, or business partner.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

All workplace parties are expected to comply with the outlined policy and the procedures herein.

### **Employer:**

- Ensure employees are trained regarding **EPA's** privacy practices;
- Immediately advise clients of any breach of the Privacy Policy;
- Annually review, date and sign the policy.

### **Responsibilities of the Information Officer (IO)**

- Facilitate compliance with PHIPA by the custodian
- Educate the agents of the custodian
- Respond to public inquiries about the custodian's information practices
- Oversee access and correction requests, and
- Handle privacy complaints.
- Ensure that reports that being submitted annually – each month collecting getting the report from HIC of each clinic

### **Responsibilities of the Health Information Custodian (HIC)**

- HIC are to ensure that staff are acting in accordance with EPA's privacy policy
- HIC are required to ensure that staff are accessing electronic and paper health records in accordance with EPA Personal Health Information touchpoint standard operating procedures. The touchpoint document outlines who has access to which parts of a clients record and the reason needed.
- HIC are to provide access to client's health records if requested or correct a record if client believes it is inaccurate or incomplete
- HIC are to report monthly any breaches of the privacy policy to the Information Officer. Any breaches that are deemed significant are escalated to the Information Officer immediately.

### **Manager(s):**

- Ensure employees are following the Privacy Policy guidelines and procedures;
- Train employees and provide assistance if required;
- Report any breaches of the privacy policy to management.

### **Employee(s):**

- Attend training regarding **EPA's** privacy policy;
- Understand and follow the Privacy Policy procedures and guidelines at all times;

- Report any breach of the Privacy Policy to the HIC and manager

## **PROCEDURES**

**EPA** collects and uses personal information solely for the purpose of conducting business and developing an understanding of its customers.

**EPA** hereby asserts that personal information will only be used for the following purposes:

- To invoice clients for services provided;
- To collect unpaid accounts;
- For follow-up of care;
- To remind clients of appointments, which is typically done electronically and/or through telephone/texts
- The cost for some clients may be paid for by a third party (i.e. WSIB, Automobile insurance). These third parties have your consent or the authority to direct us to disclose certain personal information to ensure client entitlement for payment;
- We retain our client information for 10 years as required by the Regulated Health Professional Act; Some clients may return for further treatment at a later date, and their past records may be of benefit.
- For Clinic events, announcements or updates where we sent via email/text we have received your explicit consent and where clients always have the ability to opt out at any time. We specifically avoid regular mass emails. You could expect to receive 2-4 mass emails annually at best.

## **Protect Personal Information**

Access to personal information will be authorized only for the employees and other agents of **EPA** who require the information to perform their job duties, and to those otherwise authorized by law.

**EPA's** computer and network systems are secured by complex passwords. Only authorized individuals may access secure systems and databases.

- Active files are kept in locked filing cabinets;
- Personal information is not transferred to volunteers, summer students, interns, or other non-paid staff by e-mail or any other electronic format;
- All unnecessary paperwork is shredded so it cannot be seen or duplicated.
- Electronic information is either anonymized or encrypted before being transmitted
- Our staff members are trained to collect, use and disclose personal information only as necessary to fulfil their duties and in accordance with our privacy policy

**EPA's** Web site will include our privacy policy and disclose our personal information practices. Individuals inputting data into the Web site will be notified of:

- Personally identifiable information about the individual that is collected from the Web site or through affiliate sites;
- Information about the organization collecting the data;
- How the data will be used;
- With whom the data may or may not be disclosed;
- What options are available to the individual regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information;
- The information technology security procedures in place that protect against the destruction, loss, theft, alteration, or misuse of personal information under **EPA's** possession and control;
- How the individual may access and correct any inaccuracies in their personal information;
- **EPA** may share compiled demographic information with its business partners and/or advertisers, but no personal information that can identify any individual person shall be disclosed;
- This Web site may contain links to other sites, but **EPA** is not responsible for the privacy practices of other organizations' site;
- Site visitors are given the choice to opt out of having their personal information used at the point where the information is gathered.

### **You Can Look at Your Records**

In most instances, **EPA** will grant individuals access to their personal information upon presentation of a written request and satisfactory identification. If an individual finds errors of fact with his/her personal information, please notify **EPA** as soon as possible to make the appropriate corrections. We reserve the right to charge \$30.00 for the first twenty pages of the record and 25 cents for each additional page.

Should **EPA** deny an individual's request for access to his/her personal information, **EPA** will advise in writing of the reason for such a refusal. The individual may then challenge the decision.

**EPA** may use personal information without the individual's consent under particular circumstances. These situations include, but are not limited to:

- **EPA** is under obligation by law to disclose personal information in order to adhere to the requirements of an investigation of the contravention of a regional or federal, under the purview of the appropriate authorities;
- An emergency exists that threatens an individual's life, health, or personal security;
- The personal information is for in-house statistical study or research;
- The personal information is already publicly available;
- Disclosure is required to investigate a breach of contract.

## **If there is a Privacy Breach**

While we will take precautions to avoid any breach of your privacy, if there is a loss, theft or unauthorized access of your personal health information we will notify you.

Upon learning of a possible or known breach, we will take the following steps:

- We will contain the breach to the best of our ability, including by taking the following steps if applicable
  - Retrieving hard copies of personal health information that have been disclosed
  - Ensuring no copies have been made
  - Taking steps to prevent unauthorized access to electronic information (e.g., change passwords, restrict access, temporarily shut down system)
- We will notify affected individuals
  - We will provide our contact information in case the individual has further questions
  - We will provide the Commissioner's contact information and advise the affected individual of their right to complain to the Commissioner
- We will investigate and remediate the problem, by:
  - Conducting an internal investigation
  - Determining what steps should be taken to prevent future breaches (e.g. changes to policies, additional safeguards)
  - Ensuring staff is appropriately trained and conduct further training if required

Depending on the circumstances of the breach, we may notify and work with the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario. If we take disciplinary action against one of our practitioners [or revoke or restrict the privileges or affiliation of one of our practitioners] for a privacy breach, we are required to report that to the practitioner's regulatory College. We may also report the breach to the relevant regulatory College if we believe that it was the result of professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity.

Do You Have Questions or Concerns? Our Information Officer can be reached at:

By Email [hr@eramosaphysio.com](mailto:hr@eramosaphysio.com)

**EPA** will investigate and respond to concerns about any aspect of the handling of personal information. This organization will address concerns to the best of its abilities.

If you wish to make a formal complaint about our privacy practices, you may make it in writing to our Information Officer. The Information Officer will acknowledge receipt of your complaint, and ensure that it is investigated promptly and that you are provided with a formal decision and reasons in writing.

You also have the right to complain to the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario if you have concerns about our privacy practices or how your personal health information has been handled, by contacting:

Information and Privacy Commissioner/Ontario  
 2 Bloor Street East, Suite 1400  
 Toronto, Ontario M4W 1A8  
 Telephone: Toronto Area (416/local 905): (416) 326-3333  
 Long Distance: 1 (800) 387-0073 (within Ontario)  
 TDD/TTY: (416) 325-7539  
 FAX: (416) 325-9195  
 www.ipc.on.ca

**REFERENCES**

- **PHIPA Act**
- **EPA’s Progressive Discipline Policy and Procedures**
  - All relevant forms (Category One and Category Two)

<b>Reviewed by/Approved:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Document to be posted:</b>

**REVIEW HISTORY**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Next Review Date</b>
		One year from today
		One year from today
		One year from today