

Why am I being asked these questions?

What is personal health information?

Personal health information is anything about your physical or mental health when getting healthcare services. When we talk about your mental health, personal health information can be things like your diagnosis, places where you get services or supports, or family history.

Who collects your personal health information?

Anyone who offers you services that help you with your mental or physical health. So this might be your doctor, social worker, therapist, drop-in worker, peer support worker and the places where they work.

Why do agencies collect and keep your personal health information?

They ask you questions and keep track of your information in a file so they can provide services that are

intended to help you most with what you need and identify services for you.

What responsibilities does the agency have?

First of all, they have the responsibility to only use your personal health information to provide you with services.

They have to let you see the information they keep about you when you ask for it. They may take some time to give you the information. If you want a copy of the information, you may have to pay some money for it.

It is the law that they have to tell you if someone has seen your information when they shouldn't have. They have to keep your information private and tell you how they keep it private.

What are your rights?

You have the right not to give any personal health

information to someone if you don't want to.

You have the right to know if your personal health information has been shared with anybody it should not have been.

You have the right to know what people do with your personal health information.



Nina's Story

Nina is 28 years old. A couple of years ago she had some mental health problems and spent some time in a hospital. After that, she took some time for herself and is now thinking about going to school or maybe getting a job. She has found an agency and is going to see a worker for the first time today.

When Nina meets her worker, he starts asking her questions about her life; some of which seem kind of personal. Nina feels a bit surprised. Nina also doesn't feel that she can say no to answering these questions. She notices that he's writing notes but doesn't know why that is happening. She also doesn't know where the notes will go or who else will see them. She asks herself, should she ask him questions or just accept this as the way it is?

Your next steps...

You can ask lots of questions like:

- Where does my personal health information go?
- Who sees my personal health information?
- Where is my personal health information kept?
- How can I see my file and the personal health information you are keeping about me?

If you don't get answers or the answers you get don't



feel right to you, you always have the right not to answer any more of the worker's questions and make a complaint.

This is one in a series of pamphlets about your privacy rights and mental health.

The other pamphlets in this series include:

- What are my privacy rights?
- Who might see my information?
- Will you share my information?
- What is in my file?

For more information about your privacy rights, please see the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario's website at www.ipc.on.ca or call:

Toronto Area (416/local 905): 416-326-3333

Long Distance: 1-800-387-0073 (within Ontario)

TDD/TTY: 416-325-7539

Pour joindre l'agente des communications bilingue, veuillez composer le: 416-326-4804