



Privacy commitment

Bayshore Home Health is and always has been committed to ensuring the confidentiality and protection of personal information in our possession. As required by law and professional standards, we collect, use and disclose personal information for the sole purpose of providing our clients with high quality health care services.

We are accountable

At Bayshore Home Health, all employees are accountable and committed to ensuring that your personal information is held in the strictest confidence. Our Quality and Risk Program Manager is Bayshore Home Health's Privacy Officer, and is responsible for overall compliance to the requirements of all privacy legislation and Bayshore Home Health's privacy practices.

What we collect and why

Bayshore Home Health's staff will only ask for information that we feel is necessary for the purpose of providing your care. We do not indiscriminately collect information, and constantly review our practices to ensure that this remains true.

For example, when you request or require home support or personal care services, we collect information regarding your general health status and ability to perform activities of daily living, so that we are best able to evaluate how we can support you. For nursing services, we conduct a more thorough health assessment to the degree appropriate to your condition and level of care required, and in keeping with the standards of provincial professional licensing bodies. If at any time we require more or different information, or information is required for a purpose other than the service discussed, you will be contacted and your consent will be obtained.

Our staff will endeavor to ensure that all personal information is accurate, complete and up-to-date, so that we can provide you with appropriate care and services. Your information is not kept up-to-date after you have been discharged from service.

Your permission

At the start of your service, we will ask you to sign a Client Consent, giving us your expressed written consent for all aspects of your service. This may include such things as conducting a care assessment, providing your care and asking your permission regarding release of information. All of these will be discussed with you by our supervisor or nurse.

Your consent is considered valid through to the end of your service, provided the reasons for the consent have not changed. You may withdraw your permission or consent in part or in whole, however, at any time during your care. Should this occur, Bayshore Home Health's staff will inform you of the implications of that withdrawal.

For individuals who are unable to provide consent (i.e., minors, those who are seriously ill, mentally handicapped persons), consent will be obtained from an authorized authority (i.e., legal guardian, power of attorney or estate executor).

How we use personal information

Your personal information is used only for the purpose of providing your care services. This information is shared only with those individuals involved in your care, and excludes anyone you request. In rare cases, we may be required by law or other legal authorities to release personal information. In such cases, Bayshore Home Health will always attempt to inform you about the release of your personal information to legal authorities.

Finally, your information may be reviewed during our auditing and quality improvement activities. Where appropriate, these activities are done without reference to specific individuals. This is an important aspect of our Quality Management System and allows us to continually monitor our performance and improve the services we deliver. Our clients' names are never shared with any individual or organization for the purposes of commercial activity.

Who we share personal information with

When you start your service with Bayshore Home Health, and sign the Client Consent, we will explain that your personal information is likely to be shared with individuals who are part of your "multidisciplinary" care team. All employees of Bayshore Home Health do not have access to your personal information, just because they are our employees and you are our client. Your information is shared only with individuals involved in your care. At the start of your care, or at any time during your service, you may inform us of anyone whom you do not want to receive your information (in part or in whole).

How long we keep personal information

On occasion, we must access personal information even after service has been discontinued. We retain all discontinued client records for a minimum of 10 years, or longer if required by provincial regulation. These records, whether at a Bayshore Home Health location or off-site, are stored in a manner that ensures their ongoing security. Records are kept of files that we retain, so that we may retrieve these files if required. At the end of the 10-year period, all personal information that we possess, regardless of format, is destroyed in a confidential manner.

Safeguards

Bayshore Home Health considers your health information extremely confidential, and has put many safeguards in place to ensure its security.

Information is collected in many different formats at Bayshore Home Health, due to the nature of our business. Your information is stored electronically, in paper files and in the knowledge of our staff.

All of our employees are orientated and trained on privacy practices at the time of hire and must sign a Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Agreement at that time. In addition, they receive training routinely during their employment with Bayshore Home Health, and information about our privacy practices is available to them through our staff website.

The knowledge and information our employees have about our clients is considered private and confidential. Our staff will use personal information in a professional capacity only, while they function as employees of Bayshore Home Health, and will not share it with anyone. At any time, if our employees receive a request to share information or are asked about any client of Bayshore Home Health, they will not disclose any information and will forward the request to their supervisor.

The personal information that we store in electronic format is protected by security firewalls, user names and passwords that dictate what information an individual can access. Paper files are protected by being stored in appropriate locations at our offices, where access is permitted to only those employees with the necessary authority. After hours, these files are kept in a locked,

secured area. Faxes are sent via pre-programmed fax numbers to reduce the possibility of sending information to the incorrect recipient, and are accompanied by a cover letter with a Confidentiality Statement that tells the receiver what to do if they receive a communication in error.

Your right to see your personal information

If you wish to see your personal information at any time, you may do so by submitting a request in writing and forwarding it to your local Bayshore Home Health office. As your file may contain words that are particular to the medical and nursing community, we will invite you to meet with one of our nurse managers when you review your file, so that they are available to answer any questions you may have. You may obtain a copy of your file, in part or in whole, if required.

If you need more information or have a question or concern about our privacy practices

If you have any questions or concerns about your personal information, or if you would like more information about Bayshore Home Health's policies and practices for managing personal information, please contact Bayshore Home Health's Privacy Officer by simply clicking on the email link below, by emailing privacyofficer@bayshore.ca (with "Privacy Officer" noted in the email subject line), by phoning 1-800-668-9490 Ext. 298, or in writing to Privacy Officer, Bayshore Home Health, 2155 Dunwin Drive, Unit 10, Mississauga, Ontario L5L 4M1.