

STANDARD GUIDELINE: Secondary Use of Personal Health Information for Educational Purposes



Program Area: Health Information Services
Section: Privacy & Access
Reference Number: ORG.1411.SG.003
Approved by: Regional Lead-Corporate Services & Chief Financial Officer
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PURPOSE:

To protect personal health information (PHI) under *The Personal Health Information Act (PHIA)*.

To recognize Southern Health-Santé Sud’s statutory obligations to protect the privacy of those who entrust us with their PHI and to support access to PHI for clinical, operational and health care improvement efforts.

DEFINITIONS:

Educational Purpose: Means an activity involving access to and use of PHI for the purpose of instruction that is conducted outside the therapeutic relationship. This does not include a professional consultation for the purpose of providing health care to an individual nor bedside rounds that are part of patient health care.

Grand Rounds: A teaching forum where the medical problems and treatments of a particular patient or population is presented to an audience of health care professionals, students and interested staff.

Secondary Use: Means using PHI for a purpose not directly related to the care of the individual the information is about.

Staff: Includes all employees and persons associated with Southern Health-Santé Sud, including medical staff, contracted individuals, students, volunteers, researchers, educators, and board members.

Use: Involves revealing PHI to someone within the Trustee’s own organization who needs to know the information to do their job. Use includes processing, reproduction, transmission and transportation of PHI. Use also includes accessing and viewing PHI within an electronic health system.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- Staff are not permitted to “mine” health records for learning opportunities.
- There are staff within Southern Health-Santé Sud whose role is to coordinate and provide education to others, this includes staff who are members of a facility/regional standard review

committee, clinical teaching unit and preceptors. These staff may access and use PHI for educational purposes; however, it must be limited to the greatest extent possible for the purpose and documented accordingly.

- Any PHI presented at Grand Rounds or included in other educational tools (i.e. video) must be either de-identified or presented with consent from the individual the information is about.
- Some positions within Southern Health-Santé Sud may also work under contract with Southern Health-Santé Sud and an educational institution. Access to PHI for nonregional purposes is not authorized for secondary use. Different rules and processes may apply.
- Staff are not authorized to access and use PHI for the purpose of self-directed learning. Access to an individual's health record for this purpose is not permitted under PHIA. For example; accessing an electronic health system to follow the progress of a patient that has been discharged from the care of the trustee.
- All staff are subject to a random or focused audit of a user or patient centric report of activity and must be able to clearly demonstrate their purpose for access in the absence of corroborating evidence (i.e. scheduling, responsibilities, etc.).
- Where Staff request access to PHI for the purpose of furthering their own educational and professional development, the request will be submitted to the site Privacy Officer or delegate. The site Privacy Officer or delegate will assess the following:
 - clear educational goal or purpose,
 - benefit to the public and Southern Health-Santé Sud,
 - appropriateness of the requested use of PHI to meet the stated goal or purpose,
 - appropriateness of the educational goal to the requestor's role, and
 - that the PHI is de-identified to the greatest extent possible.

Staff should not be sourcing their own data for this purpose or self-selecting what may be of educational value to themselves.

REFERENCES:

Shared Health Guideline: Secondary Use of PHI for Educational Purposes
The Personal Health Information Act
ORG.1411.PL.502 Use and Disclosure of PHI