



Compassion, Innovation, and Hope.

YOUTHDALE TREATMENT CENTRES

YOUTHDALE'S PRIVACY FAQ

As a mental health service provider that delivers integrative multi-disciplinary care, Youthdale is committed to maintaining our patients' most privileged and sensitive information. Youthdale has developed policies and procedures in accordance with Ontario's Privacy legislation. This information sheet is intended to provide you with an introduction to Youthdale's Privacy program.

What is Personal Health Information (PHI)?

Personal Health Information (PHI) is "identifying information" collected about an individual. It includes information like:

- Your physical or mental health, including family history;
- The health care services you receive;
- Your health care number; and
- Other information relating to your health and healthcare history.

What is the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA)?

PHIPA is Ontario's health-specific privacy legislation. PHIPA governs the way in which PHI may be collected, used and disclosed within the health care system. It also regulates individuals and organizations that receive PHI from healthcare professionals and confirms your right to access your own PHI. Youthdale and all of its employees, board members, volunteers, students, contractors and vendors are required to follow PHIPA. Youthdale is committed to remaining up-to-date with amendments to privacy legislation and best practices in Ontario.

What is the "Circle of Care"?

The term "Circle of Care" is commonly used to describe the ability of healthcare providers to collect, use or disclose PHI for the purpose of providing healthcare, on the basis of implied consent. This means that Youthdale may be allowed to share your PHI with another healthcare provider that is currently participating in your care, as long as it is done for the purpose of maintaining or improving the quality of care you receive. This may include a public hospital, Schedule 1 psychiatric facility, ambulance service, laboratory, pharmacy, or other community or mental health program whose primary purpose is to provide healthcare.

Family members are NOT considered to be part of your Circle of Care. If you are 16 or older, Youthdale can only share your PHI with your family with your consent, or in certain exceptional circumstances.

Finally, note that if you are under 16, your parent or guardian is able to make most decisions on your behalf about collection, use and disclosure of your PHI, including providing consent on your behalf, unless you are capable of making your own decisions and you disagree with their decisions.

From whom does Youthdale COLLECT personal health information?

In order for Youthdale to provide you with the best quality care, we may collect PHI directly from you, or from someone who has been designated as your substitute decision-maker (SDM). Youthdale may collect from others, including health care organizations and professionals within your Circle of Care. Youthdale may also collect PHI from others outside the Circle of Care, either with or without consent, if the collection is necessary for providing healthcare and Youthdale cannot rely on the information collected from you as complete or accurate, or it cannot be obtained in a timely manner. Finally, Youthdale may collect information, with or without your consent, in order to examine, assess, observe or detain you under the Mental Health Act.

How does Youthdale USE personal health information?

- To provide direct healthcare services,
- To plan, administer and manage programs and services,
- To obtain payment for treatment and care (from OHIP, private insurers),
- To comply with legal and regulatory requirements,
- To perform quality improvement activities, e.g. satisfaction surveys, program evaluations,
- To support Youthdale's research programs. Researchers working on approved studies can have access to health information, provided that consent and privacy issues have been addressed,
- To support Youthdale's educational activities. Health information is used for teaching purposes with measures taken to protect privacy and confidentiality,
- To examine, assess, observe or detain individuals under the Mental Health Act.

Whom does Youthdale DISCLOSE personal health information to?

Youthdale may disclose (share) your PHI with:

- Other healthcare providers involved in your Circle of Care, provided you haven't withdrawn your consent,
- Any third party, including family members, provided that you have consented,
- For the purpose of contacting a relative, friend or potential substitute decision-maker, if you are injured, incapacitated, ill or unable to give consent personally, or where it is reasonably necessary to provide you with health care and consent cannot be obtained in a timely way,
- Public and law enforcement authorities as permitted and required by law (for example, to report Communicable diseases or by warrant or subpoena),
- With or without consent, for purposes of examining, assessing, observing or detaining individuals under the Mental Health Act.

For clients of Youthdale’s inpatient units: Youthdale may provide formal discharge summaries, including special assessments, laboratory results, etc. to members of your Circle of Care, including your regular treating physician or other healthcare providers, unless Youthdale is aware that you have expressly withheld or withdrawn consent. In most cases, we will ask for your express consent before sharing PHI outside the Circle of Care. Information will be provided to your parent or guardian at the time of discharge without your consent only when it is necessary to ensure your safety. Such information may include medications dispensed, outstanding issues and follow-up recommendations.

For clients of Youthdale’s outpatient services: Youthdale will rely on implied consent to provide a formal consultation note, with recommendations as appropriate to the referring physician. If you wish to restrict or withhold PHI from a healthcare provider, but Youthdale believes this PHI is reasonably necessary to provide care, Youthdale will advise the recipient of the PHI that you have “locked” or withheld your consent to the disclosure of the PHI.

Whenever possible, Youthdale will respect your wishes to restrict or withhold PHI, and will work closely to ensure that your rights are observed, while delivering quality health care, maintaining safety and adhering to legal authority.

How does Youthdale protect an individual’s personal health information?

- We audit/monitor the paper and electronic health record regularly,
- We investigate any complaints about our privacy practices and take appropriate measures to resolve such complaints,
- Privacy awareness training is provided to all new staff in orientation and is available to existing staff through a variety of forums,
- Health records are kept in secure and controlled areas with restricted access to authorized Youthdale staff and agents,
- We have security measures such as encryption, and passwords for all electronic records.

Our goal is to make sure that everyone who is affiliated with Youthdale in a professional role understands their privacy responsibilities and is aware of the rules and regulations.

How can an individual access their personal health information?

Any Youthdale client, past or present, has the right to access their PHI. Clients can complete a written “Request to Access a Record of Personal Health Information” form and submit it to Youthdale’s Privacy Officer.

How can an individual report a privacy concern?

Any individual with a privacy concern may report it directly to the Youthdale Privacy Officer by mail, telephone, fax, or email. The concern will be investigated and followed-up as needed.

To discuss issues relating to Youthdale's information handling procedures please contact Youthdale's Privacy Officer:

**Erin Hann, 416-368-4896 ext. 2384
ehann@youthdale.ca**

Individuals have the right to raise their concerns with the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario if they are not satisfied with the response from Youthdale.

**Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario
2 Bloor Street East, Suite 1400
Toronto, ON M4W 1A8
Tel: 800-387-0073**