

NEWS RELEASE

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With the proclamation of amendments to *The Personal Health Information Act* (PHIA) on May 1, 2010, Manitoba Ombudsman Irene Hamilton has released a fact sheet highlighting basic information that Manitobans should know about controlling and seeing their personal health information.

10 Points About Controlling and Seeing your Personal Health Information sets out individuals' PHIA rights -- including seeking access to their own personal health information -- and identifies the specific situations where an individual can object to a trustee sharing their personal health information.

"It is important that Manitobans know that with the recent changes to PHIA, hospitals, personal care homes and certain other trustees who have provided services, can share the name and address of a patient, resident or service recipient with their charitable fundraising foundation, unless the individual the information is about tells the trustee not to," said Hamilton. "A similar sharing provision now also exists where a hospital and personal care home can provide to a representative of a religious organization an in-patient's or resident's general health status and location in the facility, unless the individual tells the trustee not to."

PHIA requires facilities to post notice, or provide notice in writing, to individuals about sharing their information with charitable fundraising foundations and religious organizations and the individual's right to opt-out.

The *10 points* tip sheet sets out the other situations where an individual can say that they do not want trustees to share their personal health information. These are situations where PHIA does not require notice to the individual of their ability to control the sharing of their personal health information, although it is best practice for trustees to give notice to the individual.

"Individuals need to know in what situations they can opt out of the sharing of their personal health information. They should be aware of when they can expect to be notified of their rights and when they might not be," said Hamilton.

If you have questions about your PHIA rights, including the Ombudsman's ability to investigate a PHIA concern, please contact our office for more information.

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