

# **Privacy Policy of Syra Porter Therapy**

The privacy of your personal health information is very important to me. I am committed to collecting, using, and disclosing your personal information responsibly and only to the extent necessary for the services I provide. I also aim to be open and transparent about how I handle personal information. This page describes my privacy policies.

## **Primary Purposes for collecting personal health information for my services:**

I collect information about a client's history, including family history, social situation and emotional functioning to help assess their psychotherapy needs, advise them of their options, and should they choose, provide them with psychotherapy. I may also obtain a baseline of assessment information so that, in providing ongoing services, I can identify changes that occur over time.

## **Related and Secondary Purposes for collecting Personal Information:**

The most common examples of related and secondary purposes are as follows:

- Invoicing for psychotherapy services
- My regulatory college (College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario) may request my records as part of their regulatory activities. Sometimes these reports include personal health information about my clients, or other individuals, to support the concern. Various government agencies also have the authority to review my files as part of their mandates. All persons involved, in these circumstances, are required by law to maintain the confidentiality of any accessed information.
- The cost of some services provided by my practice to clients is paid for by third parties (ie. OHIP, WSIB, private insurance). These third-party payers must have the client's consent or legislative authority to direct me to collect and disclose to them certain information to demonstrate a client's entitlement to this funding.

## **Protecting Personal Information**

Records relating to all clients are confidential. In general, this means that no information contained in records is provided to a third party without written consent of the client. [There are some specific ethical or legal circumstances when this confidentiality requirement is waived: I shall reveal information when there is a suspicion of child or elder abuse, when clients pose a significant danger to themselves or others, when clients report sexual abuse by a health care professional, or when the court issues a subpoena for records or testimony.]

In addition, I take the following precautions when storing or moving client information:

- I make use of a secure, web-based practice management system to store and manage my client records. This includes information such as client

appointments, billing documents, session notes, contact details, and other client-related information and documents. The system I use is encrypted and all practice data in the system is routinely backed up to ensure the privacy and protection of sensitive client information and to assist me with PHIPA compliance.

### **Retention and Destruction of Personal Information**

My regulatory College requires me to retain personal information for 10 years after the last significant client contact. This also helps ensure that I can answer any questions you may have, after our time together, about services I have provided to you. After the time frame above, I destroy electronic information by deleting it and when the hardware is discarded, I ensure that the hard drive is physically destroyed.

### **Data Breach Protocol**

In the case that personal health information has been accessed, used, or disclosed or disposed of in an unauthorized manner, I will comply with PHIPA requirements and investigate and respond to the incident. This includes any reasonable request for information relating to the individual(s) affected.

### **You Can Look at Your Information**

With only a few exceptions, you have the right to see what personal information I hold about you and often all you must do is ask. I can help you identify what records I might have about you. I will also try to help you understand any information you do not understand (ie. Short forms, technical language, etc.). I will need to confirm your identity if I cannot readily do so before providing you with this access. If I cannot give you access, I will tell you within 30 days if possible, and tell you the reason, as best as I can, as to why I cannot give you access. If you believe there is a mistake in the fact-based information, you have the right to ask for it to be corrected. I reserve the right to charge a nominal fee for such requests.

### **Do you have a question or concern?**

For general inquiries, the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario oversees the administration of the privacy legislation in the private sector. This Commissioner also acts as a kind of ombudsperson for privacy disputes. The Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario can be reached at the following address:

Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario  
2 Bloor St E #1400, Toronto, ON M4W 1A8  
Phone: 416-326-3333 | 1-800-387-0073  
Fax: 416-325-9195  
TTD/TTY: 416-325-7539  
<https://www.ipc.on.ca>