



Langs' Privacy Statement

At Langs, we work hard to ensure that you, our patient, are treated with respect and sensitivity for all your health care needs including your Personal Health Information. We have therefore taken measures to ensure that we protect the privacy, confidentiality and security of your Personal Health Information. These measures include:

- Policies and Procedures of Information Practices which govern how we use the Personal Health Information we collect from you, and the purposes and conditions under which we may disclose it
- Training for our staff, volunteers and health care professionals

Definition of Personal Health Information

Personal Health Information is spoken or written information that:

- relates to the physical or mental health of the individual, including how the individual's family medical history relates to the individual's health care. It can include a plan of service for the individual within the meaning of the Long-Term Care Act, 1994.
- relates to the individual's eligibility for health care
- is the individual's health card number
- identifies a provider of health care to the individual
- identifies a substitute decision maker of the individual

For Our Patients

Statement of Information Practices

Langs follows nine principles which describe how we use the Personal Health Information we collect from you, how we protect your information, and purposes and conditions under which we may share it. We value the trust you have placed in us, and we are committed to ensuring that your information remains confidential and secure.

Nine Principles of Privacy and Confidentiality

1. Accountability and Openness

- We are accountable to protect the privacy and confidentiality of Personal Health Information in our custody or control. This means all information we have about you is private and confidential.
- Langs is open about how we protect the privacy of Personal Health Information. We have a Chief Privacy Officer to address all privacy-related inquiries or complaints.

2. Collection

- We collect Personal Health Information from you for the purpose of providing you with appropriate health care. If you are not capable of providing us the information we need in order to treat you, we may collect the information from other health care professionals who are or who have been involved in your treatment. We may also collect information from someone who has been designated as your substitute decision maker.
- We will only collect the information we need to treat you. Langs complies with all regulations and legal requirements governing health information and privacy.

3. We will use your Personal Health Information to:

- treat you;
- plan, administer and manage our internal operations;
- monitor or prevent fraud or any unauthorized receipt of services or benefits;
- conduct risk management activities;
- conduct quality improvement activities;
- compile statistics;
- conduct research;
- teach;
- conduct patient satisfaction surveys;
- facilitate resolution concerns related to the provision of care; and
- meet legal and regulatory requirements.

4. Disclosure

- Your Personal Health Information will be shared with other health care professionals involved in your care.
- In cases where you are unable to provide consent, we may discuss parts of your Personal Health Information with your substitute decision maker in order to obtain their consent for ongoing treatment.
- We will disclose Personal Health Information where we are legislated to do so or where a court order or warrant is provided to us.
- We will disclose your location as a patient to individuals inquiring about you. You may request that we do not provide this information.
- With your consent, we will also disclose your Personal Health Information to researchers as long as our organization has approved the research proposal, and the researcher has entered into a confidentiality agreement with us. The researchers would have received approval from an ethics committee.
- With your permission we will disclose your information for the purposes of processing insurance claims.
- We will disclose your Personal Health Information to an individual or an organization **with** your consent.

5. Consent

- When you share your Personal Health Information with us, we believe you are giving us consent to use and share your information for your health care.
- If you do not wish your Personal Health Information to be used or shared, you have the right to refuse. This may include all or part of your Personal Health Information. You may refuse at the time we request the information or anytime afterwards. We may not be able to fulfill your wishes if they impact our ability to deliver quality health care. Also, we may be legislated to use or disclose the information that you are objecting to. In these cases, we will discuss with you the impact of your objection.
- If we find it necessary to disclose your information for purposes other than providing health care, we will notify you about the purpose of the disclosure and obtain your consent.

6. Accuracy

- Our goal is to keep your Personal Health Information as accurate and complete as possible.

7. Safeguards

- We maintain a high level of security with respect to the confidentiality of your Personal Health Information. Our staff and volunteers are required to abide by our privacy policies and must sign a Confidentiality Agreement annually and attend the Privacy and Confidentiality Orientation (new staff/refreshers all staff). We have processes and technology in place to secure your information, and we monitor compliance with our information practices. We also require support service agencies/contractors to sign a Privacy Agreement.

8. Individual Access and Correction

- We establish and maintain a record of your Personal Health Information. You have the right to request access or correction to your Personal Health Information.
- You may submit a written request for access to the Privacy Officer.
- You may request corrections to the information in your record by providing us with additional information that supports your request. We will not change medical opinions.

9. Inquiries and Challenging Compliance

- You may direct any inquiries about our information practices, or complaints with respect to our compliance with our information practices, to our Chief Privacy Officer, Lynda MacKinnon, 519 653 1470 ex 383 or lyndam@langs.org
- Alternately, if you are not satisfied with the response, you may contact the Information and Privacy Commissioner in writing at 2 Bloor Street East, Toronto, ON, M4W 1A8 or by telephone at 1-800-387-0073 or by email at info@ipc.on.ca.

We have developed Frequently Asked Questions to assist you in understanding what our information practices mean to you.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is privacy?

It is your right as a patient to determine when, how, and to what extent you share your Personal Health Information about yourself with others.

2. What is confidentiality?

Protecting your information after it is collected. This means that the staff members, physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses, secretarial staff and volunteers must not talk about or disclose your Personal Health Information to anyone other than you, your substitute decision maker where applicable, or other staff or health care members who have a need to know.

3. What is security?

Physically and technologically protecting your information after it is collected. This means that all staff members and volunteers will physically protect your information. For instance we lock file cabinets, store records in secure areas, log off computers, etc. At Langs we only provide computer access to people who need it to do their job.

4. What is circle of care?

In a medical clinic, the circle of care would include:

- the physician;
- the nurse practitioner;
- the physician's assistant;
- nurses;

- a specialist or other health care provider referred by the physician; and
- any other health care professional selected by the patient, such as a registered dietitian or social worker who is involved in your care.

5. Does the agency share any of my information with other organizations for reasons other than to provide me with care?

Not without your consent, or unless we are regulated to do so by law.

6. Who is a substitute decision maker?

A substitute decision maker (SDM) is an individual who makes decisions on your behalf for treatment, sharing and accessing your Personal Health Information. This person may be your power of attorney, parent, spouse, capable child, or a person you have chosen to make decisions for you when you are not able to.

7. What should I include in my request to access my Personal Health Information?

The written request for access must include your name, date of birth, mailing address, as well as a description of the information you are requesting. The request must be dated, signed by you and witnessed by another person. The request must be made in person with photo identification. If you are accessing Personal Health Information as a substitute decision maker we also may require legal documentation, e.g., power of attorney, custodial parent.

8. Can my family see my Personal Health Information?

Not without your consent, or consent of your substitute decision maker where applicable. In the event of your death, we would still require consent from the highest authority such as the estate trustee to provide access to family members.

9. Can you provide me with examples of when I may be required to provide consent, and tell me what happens if I am unable to provide consent?

Consent is required for insurance companies, lawyers, police, researchers, employers, etc. Langs will not provide access to your Personal Health Information to any individual or organization outside your health care team unless we are regulated to do so. If you are unable to provide consent directly to the organization, your substitute decision maker such as your power of attorney, parent, spouse, or capable child must sign the consent. The person is bound by law to act on your behalf and to make decisions based on their belief of what you would wish to be done if you were able to decide for yourself.

10. Can all Langs staff access my Personal Health Information?

No, access is only provided to staff who have a “need to know” to carry out their duties. Health care professionals directly involved in your care may access your Personal Health Information.

11. If I am a youth, do I need parental consent if I wish to access my Personal Health Information?

Access is determined by the capacity of the individual. If a Health Care Provider determines that you do not have capacity, we would require consent from your custodial parent or legal guardian. If you are considered to be capable, then you may access your Personal Health Information without parental consent.

12. What happens if I am inquiring about records for a deceased patient?

To obtain records for individuals who are deceased, proof of executorship or legal signing authority must be submitted with the request. An individual could also provide a written statement stating they have assumed responsibility for the estate.

13. How do I contact the Privacy Officer at Langs?

Please call Lynda MacKinnon, 519-653-1470 ext. 383 or email lyndam@langs.org