

## **PRIVACY AND ANTI-SPAM CODE FOR OUR DENTAL OFFICE**

*Please refer to Appendix A for a glossary of defined terms.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004* (PHIPA) came into effect on November 1, 2004, and governs the collection, use, and disclosure of Personal Health Information within Ontario's health care system, and the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act*, which came into effect in 2001, governs Personal Information other than Personal Health Information.

In addition, Canada's anti-spam legislation came into effect on July 1, 2014. Canada's anti-spam legislation regulates how businesses and individuals communicate electronically.

We collect Personal Information about our patients directly from the patient or from the person acting on their behalf. Occasionally, we collect Personal Information about a patient from other sources if we have obtained the patient's consent to do so or if the law permits.

Privacy of Personal Information is an important principle in the provision of quality care to our patients. We understand the importance of protecting your Personal Information. We are committed to collecting, using and disclosing your Personal Information responsibly and in accordance with the law. We also try to be as open and transparent as possible about the way we handle your Personal Information.

This Office has developed this Privacy and Anti-Spam Code (this "**Code**") to provide a general description of our information and communication practices, how to obtain access to your Personal Information, how to amend incorrect information, and how to make a complaint to our Office or the

Information and Privacy Commissioner. As the rules governing the collection, use, and disclosure of Personal Information may change, our practices will evolve and adapt in response to such changes and this Code may be amended from time to time as a result thereof.

We ask that you contact our Privacy Officer in the event you have any questions or concerns regarding this Code or its implementation.

### **ANTI-SPAM POLICY OVERVIEW**

When we communicate with you, we may communicate via electronic means, such as e-mail. We strive to ensure that our communications do not contain any spam. "Spam" refers to any unsolicited Commercial Electronic Messages (or CEMs) that have been sent without consent. In that light, we require all CEMs from our Office to be in compliance with Privacy Laws. If and when we communicate with you using CEMs, you can opt out of receiving such messages by following the "Unsubscribe" link included at the bottom of such messages or by contacting Theresa Valera. Any questions or concerns with respect to CEMs from our Office may be addressed to Theresa Valera. In the event that our Office inadvertently sends out a CEM without consent, we commit to investigating every such instance and assisting the employee(s) or managers involved with renewing their understanding and awareness of our compliance responsibilities.

### **PERSONAL INFORMATION HANDLING PRINCIPLES**

#### **Accountability**

Accountability for this Office's compliance with Privacy Laws rests with our Privacy Officer even though others in the Office may be responsible for the day-to-day collection and processing of Personal Information.

Our staff are briefed on the importance of your privacy and receive training on the handling of your Personal Information.

Our Office is comprised of many persons working together to ensure that our patients and clients receive proper care. Some of our team members are Health Information Custodians and some are not. We take this opportunity to describe the structure of our Office so that you understand who may be handling your Personal Information and in what manner.

At our Office, professional dental or orthodontic services are performed by Service Providers. All professionals performing these services at the Office are Members of the College and are considered Health Information Custodians. All institutional health care services performed at the Office are provided by our Affiliate. The individuals providing the institutional health care services for our Affiliate may be Health Information Custodians whereas our Affiliate may not. We have appointed our Affiliate as our “contact person” pursuant to the Privacy Laws. To facilitate the ability of our Affiliate to carry out its responsibilities to us, your Personal Information may be disclosed to, used by, and collected by our Affiliate.

All actions by our Affiliate in respect of your Personal Information shall be in compliance with this Code and Privacy Laws. By providing your Personal Information to this Office, you are consenting to its use by us, the Service Providers and our Affiliate. We have permitted our Affiliate to collect, use, disclose, retain, or dispose of our patients’ Personal Information which we ourselves may collect, use, disclose, retain, or dispose of, provided that its actions are not contrary to the limits imposed by Privacy Laws or such other applicable law. We have informed our Affiliate of its duties under Privacy Laws and other applicable law.

This Office is responsible for Personal Information in our possession or custody, including Personal Information that has been transferred to a third party for processing.

Our Office will implement policies and practices to give effect to the principles regarding the collection, use and disclosure of Personal Information, including:

- implementing policies to protect Personal Information;
- training staff about this Code and our practices;
- establishing procedures to receive and respond to complaints and inquiries regarding Personal Information; and
- developing information to explain this Code and privacy procedures.

### **Identifying Purposes for Collecting Information**

The purposes for which Personal Information is collected in this Office will be identified before or at the time it is collected.

This Office collects Personal Information that is reasonably appropriate in the circumstance in order to fulfill the purposes disclosed by our Office, as well as otherwise permitted under applicable laws including for the following purposes:

- to deliver safe and efficient patient care;
- to identify and to ensure continuous high quality service;
- to assess your health needs;
- to advise you of treatment options;
- to enable us to contact you;
- to provide health care;
- to establish and maintain communication with you, including to distribute health care information and to book and confirm appointments;
- to offer and provide treatment, care and services in relationship to the oral and maxillofacial complex and dental care generally;
- to communicate with other treating health-care providers, including specialists and general dentists, who are the referring dentists and/or peripheral dentists;
- for teaching and demonstrating purposes on an anonymous basis;

- to allow us to efficiently follow-up for treatment, care and billing;
- to complete and submit dental and health services claims for third party adjudication and payment;
- to comply with legal and regulatory requirements, including the delivery of patients’ charts and records to the College when required by the *Regulated Health Professions Act* (RHPA);
- to comply with agreements/undertakings entered into voluntarily by this Office or a Service Provider with the College for regulatory and monitoring purposes;
- to permit potential purchasers, practice brokers or advisors to evaluate this Office, including an audit, on a confidential basis;
- to deliver your charts and records to insurance carriers to enable them to assess liability and quantify damages;
- to prepare materials for the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board as required;
- to manage patient and clients’ accounts, including invoicing, processing credit card payments and collecting unpaid accounts;
- to communicate with insurance companies and to otherwise process requests by you;
- for internal management purposes, including planning, resource allocation, policy development, quality improvement, monitoring, audit, evaluation, reporting, obtaining or processing payment for health services and human resource management; and
- to comply generally with Privacy Laws and all other applicable regulatory requirements.

When this Office collects Personal Information we will only collect Personal Information necessary for the purpose we identify to you before or at the time of collection.

When Personal Information has been collected and is to be used or disclosed for a purpose not previously identified, the new purpose will be identified prior to its use or disclosure. Your consent will be obtained before the Personal Information will be used or disclosed for any such new purpose.

When you sign the Patient Consent Form, you will be deemed to understand and accept this Office’s collection, use and disclosure of your Personal Information for the specified purposes, in each case subject to this Code and Privacy Laws.

**Consent**

Our Health Information Custodians require either express consent or implied consent from our patients before we may collect, use, or disclose Personal Information. When we collect, use, and disclose your Personal Information for health care purposes, Privacy Laws generally permit us to rely upon your implied consent. However, if the purpose is something other than health care, we may be required to obtain your express consent. The Privacy Laws also provides instances where we may collect, use, or disclose your Personal Information without consent.

Implied consent enables us to conclude from surrounding circumstances that a patient would reasonably agree to the collection, use, or disclosure of Personal Information. We may rely upon your implied consent if we are collecting your Personal Information to provide health care.

Express consent is required when we are disclosing your Personal Information to someone other than a Health Information Custodian, or to another Health Information Custodian for a purpose other than providing or assisting in providing health care.

In order for the principles of consent to be satisfied, our Office has undertaken reasonable efforts to ensure that you are advised of the purposes for which Personal Information is being used, and that you understand those purposes. Once consent is obtained, we do not need to seek your consent again unless the use, purpose or disclosure changes.

Our existing protocols for electronic submissions of dental claims require a signature on file. Specific consent may be required for additional requests from insurers. This consent shall be collected at the

time, or in conjunction with, predeterminations for extensive services, provided that the scope of Personal Information released is disclosed. If there is any doubt, Personal Information shall be released directly to you for your review and submission.

Your consent for the collection, use and disclosure of Personal Information may be given in a number of ways, such as:

- signed medical history form;
- e-mail;
- signed introductory questionnaire;
- taken verbally over the telephone and then charted; or
- written correspondence.

You may withdraw your consent upon reasonable notice to our Office.

For children under 16, a parent or other lawful guardian may consent to the collection, use or disclosure of their Personal Information even if the child has capacity. This does not apply to Personal Information that relates to:

- treatment within the meaning of the *Health Care Consent Act, 1996* about which the child has made his or her own decision, or
- counselling in which the child has participated on his or her own under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

When our Office needs consent for the collection, use or disclosure of Personal Information about a child less than 16 years of age, we may either obtain it from that child if capable, or the parent or other lawful guardian (but not the access parent, unless such a parent has been lawfully authorized in place of the custodial parent to make information decisions). If there is a conflict in consent between the child and the parent, the capable child's decision prevails with respect to the consent.

### **Limiting Use, Disclosure and Retention**

Personal Information shall not be used or disclosed for purposes other than those for which the

information is collected, except with your express Consent, or as required or permitted by law.

Our Office may disclose certain Personal Information in accordance with Privacy Laws.

This Office and our Affiliates may perform activities outside of Canada through third party agents. You acknowledge and agree that as a result, your Personal Information may be processed, used, stored or accessed in other countries and may be subject to the laws of those countries. For example, Personal Information may be disclosed in response to valid demands or requests from government authorities, courts, or law enforcement in other countries.

We will use contractual and/or other means to provide a comparable level of protection over your Personal Information while it is being accessed and/or processed by any such third party.

Our Office has protocols in place for the retention of Personal Information.

Retention of information records is defined and referenced in College's Guidelines on Dental Recordkeeping.

In destroying Personal Information, our Office has developed guidelines to ensure secure destruction in accordance with the College's Guidelines on Dental Recordkeeping.

As discussed in this Code, Personal Information may be transferred and stored outside of Canada. We encourage you to contact the Privacy Officer should you require further information.

### **Accuracy of Personal Information**

This Office endeavours to ensure that your Personal Information is as accurate, complete, and as up-to-date as necessary for the purposes that it is to be used.

The extent to which your Personal Information is accurate, complete and up-to-date will depend upon the use of the Personal Information while at all times, taking into account the interest of our patients.

Your Personal Information needs to be sufficiently accurate, complete and up-to-date to minimize the possibility that inaccurate, incomplete or out-of-date Personal Information is used to make a decision about you as our patient.

If your Personal Information changes, or if you believe the Personal Information maintained by our Office is inaccurate, we ask that you contact our Office to have the information updated or corrected.

### **Safeguards for Personal Information**

Our Office staff are aware of the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of your Personal Information and we have taken appropriate measures to safeguard your Personal Information.

These safeguards are in place to protect your Personal Information against loss or theft, as well as unauthorized access, disclosure, copying, use or modification.

Your Personal Information is protected, whether recorded on paper or electronically, and care is used in its care and destruction of to prevent unauthorized access at all times while in our care and control.

### **Openness about Privacy**

Our Office will make readily available to you specific information about our Office policies and practices relating to the management of Personal Information.

This information includes:

- the individuals at this Office and the Privacy Officer to whom you can direct any questions or complaints regarding your Personal Information;

- a copy of our Patient Consent Form that explains how this Office collects, uses and discloses your Personal Information; and
- this Code.

### **Patient Access to Personal Information**

Upon written request and with reasonable notice, you shall be informed of the existence, use and disclosure of your Personal Information, and shall be given access to it.

Upon written request and with reasonable notice, our Office shall provide you with an accounting of how your Personal Information has been used, including third party disclosures. In providing this information, we will attempt to be as specific as possible.

When it is not possible to provide a list of the organizations or individuals to which there has been disclosure about you, we will provide you with a list of such organizations or individuals to which we may have disclosed information about you. Disclosure of probabilities in these cases would satisfy this requirement.

We will respond to your request within a reasonable period of time, and at minimal or no cost to you. The request for information will be provided or made available in a form that is generally understandable.

You are free to challenge the accuracy and completeness of your Personal Information and seek to have it altered, amended, or changed.

When a challenge is not resolved to your satisfaction, we will record the substance of the unresolved challenge accordingly.

When appropriate, the existence of the unresolved challenge shall be transmitted to third parties having access to the Personal Information in question. This disclosure may be appropriate where a dentist has been challenged about a change to a service date or services rendered under consideration for insurance benefits.

## **Challenging Compliance**

You shall be able to challenge compliance with these principles with the Privacy Officer who is accountable for compliance with the Privacy Laws by each of our Health Information Custodians. Our Office has in place procedures to receive and respond to your complaints or inquiries.

The procedures are easily accessible and simple to use.

Our Office has an obligation to inform our patients who make inquiries about how to access the privacy complaint process in our Office, and about how to access that process.

The Privacy Officer will investigate each and every complaint made to the Office in writing.

If a complaint is found to be justified, the Privacy Officer will take appropriate measures, including, if necessary, amending any office policies and practices.

## **Updating this Privacy and Anti-Spam Code**

Any changes to our privacy standards and information handling practices will be reflected in this Code in a timely manner. Our Office reserves the right to change, modify, add, or remove portions of this Code at any time.

Please check this page periodically for any modifications. To determine when this Code was last updated, please refer to the modification date at the bottom of this Code.

## **How to Contact Us**

Our Privacy Officer is our Affiliate.

For more information about our privacy protection or communication practices, or to raise a concern you have with our practices, contact our Affiliate at:

21 St. Clair Avenue East, Suite #1420

Toronto, Ontario

M4T 1L9

Attention: Guy Amini, General Counsel

You have the right to complain to the Commission if you think we have violated your rights. The Commissioner can be reached at:

Information and Privacy Commissioner/Ontario

2 Bloor Street East

Suite 1400 Toronto, Ontario

M4W 1A8

1-800-387-0073

[info@ipc.on.ca](mailto:info@ipc.on.ca)

## APPENDIX –A

### DEFINITIONS

**Affiliate** – means Dental Corporation of Canada Inc. and/or an affiliate or agent thereof, which provides institutional health care services, including dental laboratory, radiological and other diagnostic services, and the operation of dental operatories and dental equipment

**Collection** – The act of gathering, acquiring or obtaining personal information from any source, including third party sources by any means

**College** – Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario

**Commercial Electronic Message or CEM** – is a message sent directly to an electronic address (such as an email address, a phone number, an instant messaging account, or social media account) with the purpose, or one of its purposes, of encouraging participation in a commercial activity.

**Commissioner** – The Information and Privacy Commissioner for the Province of Ontario

**Consent** – A voluntary agreement with what is being done or is being proposed to be done. Consent can either be express or implied. Express consent may be given explicitly, either orally or in writing

**Disclosure** – Making Personal Information available to other health information custodians or other persons

**Health Information Custodians** – Means a person or organization described in PHIPA that has custody or control of Personal Information

**Privacy Laws** – The *Regulated Health Professions Act* (RHPA), Schedules attached, *Dentistry Act, 1991*, Regulations made under these Acts, and By-laws of the College, the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004* (PHIPA), the

*Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)*, *An Act to promote the efficiency and adaptability of the Canadian economy by regulating certain activities that discourage reliance on electronic means of carrying out commercial activities, and to amend the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Act, the Competition Act, the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act and the Telecommunications Act (CASL)*

**Member** – A member of the College and includes a health profession corporation holding a valid Certificate of Authorization issued by the College

**Office** – The dental office operated by Dr. Meikle Dentistry Professional Corporation which provides professional dental services comprising of diagnosis, the interpretation of x-ray radiographs produced by the Affiliate, treatment planning and intra-oral professional services at 300 Rossland Rd E #100, Ajax, ON L1Z 0M1.

**Patient** – An individual about whom our Office collects Personal Information in order to carry out prognosis, diagnosis, and treatment, including controlled acts

**Personal Health Information** – Identifying information about an individual in oral or recorded form, if the information relates to the physical or mental health of the individual, the provisions of health care to the individual, a plan of service, payment or eligibility for health care, donation by the individual or any body part or bodily substance of the individual or is derived from the testing or examination of any such body part or bodily substance, or is the individual's health care number or identifies an individual's substitute decision maker. Included in the definition of Personal Health Information is personal information such as your name, date of birth, address, health history, or records of referral, when collected and retained in connection with the provision of health services

**Personal Information-** Identifying information about an individual, other than business contact information, and includes Personal Health Information

**Privacy Officer** – means the contact person designated in this Privacy and Anti-Spam Code as the agent of our Office authorized on our behalf to, among other things, facilitate our compliance with the Privacy Laws

**RHPA Procedural Code** – The Health Professions Procedural Code, Schedule 2 to the *Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)*

**Service Providers** – means dentists and dental professional corporations providing professional services at the Office in conjunction with Dr. Meikle Dentistry Professional Corporation