

WHEN CAN I EXPECT MY REQUEST TO BE COMPLETED?

Records are processed according to medical priority sequencing and will be completed in a timely manner. In accordance with the “Personal Health Information Protection Act” PHIPA, we have up to 30 days to process a completed request. However, we strive to complete your request as soon as possible. Please discuss timelines further with Release of Information staff.

If the request cannot be completed within 30 days, our Release of Information will contact you to explain the reason for delay.

WHAT IS A HEALTH RECORD

A health record is comprised of:

- **Personal information** (e.g. name, date of birth, gender, address, and extended health insurance numbers); and
- **Personal health information** (e.g. health card number, information relating to previous health problems and diagnoses, record of hospital visits and what health care was provided during those visits).

WHO MANAGES MY HEALTH RECORDS

Health records at the Espanola Regional Hospital and Health Centre (ERHHC) are managed by the **Health Records Department**. Health Information Management (HIM) staff oversee the collection, storage, retention and access to your hospital health records, as well as respect and maintain the confidentiality of your personal health information.

Health records at ERHHC are stored in various ways, including electronically and on paper. The retention of them is governed by the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA), which was enacted in Ontario in 2004.

WE’RE COMMITTED TO:

Asking permission before disclosing any information for purposes not related directly to your circle of care (e.g. insurance companies, lawyers etc.), unless otherwise required by law.

IS THERE A FEE?

There is no fee for providing information to other publically funded health care facilities or to physicians for continuity of patient care (*circle of care*).

For other purposes, there is an administration fee associated with a request to view and/or obtain a photocopy of your health record.

- I. If you're **requesting to view your health record**, the administrative fee is \$33.90 (\$30.00 + HST).
- II. If you're **requesting a photocopy of your health record**, the administrative fee is \$33.90 (\$30.00 + HST) for 20 pages and \$0.28 (\$0.25 + HST) for each additional page.

PLEASE NOTE: There may be additional fees charged on top of the processing fee and has to be paid prior to release of the records. The Release of Information staff will inform you of any other fees prior to completion of request as the price listed above does not reflect every request.

We accept cash, debit card, credit card and cheque.

If paying by cheque, please ensure it is made out to "Espanola Regional Hospital & Health Centre". This fee must be paid at Main Registration upon pickup.

THIRD PARTY REQUESTS FOR HEALTH RECORDS

All third-party requests for health records must be:

- made in writing, detailing the specific information and time-period being requested
- be accompanied by a valid consent form signed by the patient or the substitute decision maker. The hospital's *Consent for Release of Personal Health Information* form can be used.
- E-mail is not considered a safe and secure means of communication. We do not use e-mail to respond to requests for health records.
- be mailed, faxed, or hand-delivered to our hospital with the *attention of the Health Records Department – Release of Information*. Contact details are as follows:

Espanola Regional Hospital & Health Centre – Health Records
825 McKinnon Drive
Espanola, ON P5E 1R4
Phone: **705-869-1420**, extension **3008**
Fax: **705-869-3323**

CIRCLE OF CARE

We may collect, use and disclose personal health information on a need-to-know basis with the “Circle of Care”, which includes:

- **Our staff** who need to know to provide care, including: physicians, nurses, technicians, therapists and other health care professionals
- **Other health care providers** who are not our employees but may be required to assist in providing health care for you, including:
 - Health care practitioners and groups of health care practitioners,
 - Hospitals – public, psychiatric and private
 - Pharmacies
 - Laboratories
 - Ambulance Services
 - Homes for the Aged
 - Rest Homes
 - Nursing Homes
 - Retirement Homes
 - Other care homes
 - Homes for Special Care
 - Community health or mental health centres
 - Community Care Access Centres (CCAC)
 - Community Service Providers
 - Independent health facilities
 - Programs and services whose primary purposes are providing health care

FIPPA

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FIPPA)

Effective January 1, 2012, the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) provides the public right of access to information held by hospitals while protecting the privacy of individuals whose personal information is held in the hospital’s custody or control. Accessible information under FIPPA includes most general records and records containing your own personal information but does not include personal health information protected by the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA).

Please note that only records created or which came into the custody or control of hospitals on or after January 1, 2007, are subject to FIPPA. Records requested may also be subject, all or in part, to exemptions and exclusions as set out in FIPPA. Therefore, some or all of the record information requested may be withheld from the public.

BIRTH CERTIFICATE

The hospital does not issue birth certificates. *After birth, the hospital or midwife provides a Statement of Live Birth. This is a permanent identity record, and it is needed to apply for a birth certificate from Service Ontario.*

To obtain a birth certificate, contact;

- Service Ontario.
- The Office of the Registrar General at **1-800-461-2156**

*Replacement birth certificates do not require copies of health records.

DECEASED INDIVIDUALS / DEATH CERTIFICATE

You may request to access the health record of a deceased individual by submitting a **written request** to our Health Records Department.

You will also be required to submit a copy of the deceased person's Will naming you as the Executor.

In the absence of a Will, a letter notarized by a lawyer that confirms your legal signing authority or a Certificate of Appointment of Estate Trustee is required.

The hospital does not issue death certificates. A Medical Certificate of Death is completed by the hospital and is sent to the funeral home with the deceased. A Statement of Death is completed at the funeral home, and the death is registered with the Office of the Registrar General at Service Ontario. To obtain a death certificate, please contact Service Ontario at 1-800-267-8097 or through the Service Ontario website.

For patients who are deceased, proof of trustee/executor of the estate, or legal signing authority, must be submitted with your request. Please note that if you have Power of Attorney for Personal Care for a deceased patient, it expires upon death.

HOW CAN I GET ACCESS TO THE RECORDS IF THE PATIENT IS INCAPABLE OF GIVING CONSENT?

An authorization must be issued by the patient's Power of Attorney for Personal Care or Legal Next of Kin to request records. The request must be in writing, stating why the patient is unable to sign a consent form. The Consent for Disclosure of Health Information form (available at the hospital) must be completed (with applicable fee), signed by the patient's Power of Attorney

for Personal Care or Legal Next of Kin, dated, witnessed and mailed to MGH Release of Information Office.

CAN THE HEALTH RECORDS STAFF RELEASE MY INFORMATION OVER THE PHONE?

Release of Information staff are unable to interpret or advise on health issues or on the care documented in the records. We recommend that health information be reviewed in conjunction with your health care provider, so that interpretation may be provided if necessary.

WILL THE HOSPITAL HAVE ALL MY RECORD ON FILE?

According to law we are required to keep the patient records for 10 years from the last visit to the hospital. If the patient was a child, the records are kept for 10 years past the year the patient reaches their 18th birthday.

HOW DO I ACCESS PICTURE IMAGES OF MY X-RAY, ULTRASOUND?

Health Records Department does not have access to the actual images taken during your X-ray, Ultrasound. Please contact Diagnostic Imaging Department at 705-869-1420 x 3500 to receive the copy of images.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

- Personal Health Information Protection Act
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/04p03>
- Privacy / Fippa
<https://www.ontario.ca/document/freedom-information-and-protection-privacy-manual>
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90f31>
- IPC
<https://www.ipc.on.ca/about-us/contact-us/>

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For additional information about accessing, requesting, or correcting health records, please contact Health Records at (705) 869-1420, ext. 3008.

For more information about our privacy practices, to discuss withdrawing consent, or to raise privacy concerns or complaints, please contact our Privacy Officer at (705) 869-1420, ext. 3108