

PRIVACY POLICY

Martel and Mitchell Rehabilitation Inc.

Privacy of personal information is an important principle at **Martel and Mitchell Rehabilitation**. We are committed to collecting, using and disclosing personal information responsibly and only to the extent necessary for the goods and services we provide. We also try to be open and transparent as to how we handle personal information. This document describes our privacy policies.

WHAT IS PERSONAL INFORMATION?

Personal information is information about an identifiable individual. Personal information includes information that relates to their personal characteristics (e.g., gender, age, income, home address or phone number, ethnic background, family status), their health (e.g., health history, health conditions, health services received by them) or their activities and views (e.g., religion, politics, opinions, expressed by an individual, an opinion or an evaluation of an individual). Personal information is to be contrasted with business information (e.g., an individual's business address and telephone number) which is not protected by privacy legislation.

WHO WE ARE

The team at **Martel and Mitchell Rehabilitation** is comprised of the following registered professionals: physiotherapists, occupational therapists, kinesiologists, one psychotherapist, and one massage therapist. The none registered members of our team includes administrative and rehabilitation assistants. We use several consultants that may in the course of their duties have limited access to personal information we hold. These include computer consultants, maintenance, bookkeepers and accountants, temporary workers to cover holidays, credit card companies, cleaners and lawyers. We also have students and volunteers that are given limited access to personal information. We restrict their access to the personal information we hold as responsibly as possible. We have their assurance that they follow appropriate privacy principles.

WE COLLECT PERSONAL INFORMATION: PRIMARY PURPOSES

About Clients

We collect, use and disclose personal information to serve our clients. For our clients the primary purpose for collecting personal information is to provide treatment. For example, we collect information about a client's health history, including their family history, physical condition and function and social situation to help us assess what their health care needs are, to advise them of their options and then provide the health care they choose to have. A second primary purpose is to obtain a baseline of health and social information so we can identify changes that are occurring over time. It would be rare for us to collect such information without the client's expressed consent, but this might occur in an emergency (e.g., a family member passing a message on from our client and we have no reason to believe that the message is not genuine).

About Contract Staff, volunteers and Students

For people who are contracted to do work for us (e.g., temporary workers), our primary purpose for collecting personal information is to ensure we can contact them in the future (e.g., for new assignments) and for necessary work-related

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communication (e.g., sending out paychecks, year-end tax receipts). Examples of the type of personal information we collect for those purposes include home addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses. It is rare for us to collect such information without prior consent, but it might happen in the case of a health emergency (e.g., a COVID or SARS outbreak) or to investigate a possible breach of law (e.g., if a theft were to occur in the clinic). If contract staff volunteers or students wish a letter of reference or an evaluation, we will collect information about their work-related performance and provide a report as authorized by them.

WE COLLECT PERSONAL INFORMATION: RELATED AND SECONDARY PURPOSES

Like most organizations, we also collect, use and disclose information for purposes related to or secondary to our primary purposes. The most common examples of our related and secondary purposes are as follows:

- To invoice clients for goods or services that were not paid for at the time, to process credit card payments or to collect unpaid accounts.
- To advise clients that their product or service should be reviewed (e.g., to ensure a product is still functioning properly and appropriate for their current needs and to consider modifications or replacement).
- To advise clients and other individuals of special events or opportunities (e.g., a seminar, development of a new service, arrival of a new product) that we have available.
- Our clinic reviews clients and other files for the purpose of ensuring that we provide high quality services, including assessing the performance of our staff, in addition, external consultants (e.g., auditors, lawyers, practice consultants, voluntary accreditation programs) may on our behalf do audits and continuing quality improvement reviews of our Clinic, including reviewing client files and interviewing our staff.
- Our team of clinicians are regulated by their respective colleges (i.e. The College of Physiotherapists of Ontario, The College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario, The College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario, The College of Massage Therapists of Ontario and The College of Kinesiologists of Ontario) who may inspect our records and interview our staff as a part of their regulatory activities in the public interest. In addition, as professionals, we will report serious misconduct, incompetence or incapacity of other practitioners, whether they belong to other organizations or our own. Also, our organization believes that it should report information suggesting serious illegal behavior to the authorities. External regulators have their own strict privacy obligations. Sometimes these reports include personal information about our clients, or other individuals, to support the concern (e.g., improper services). Also, like all organizations, various government agencies (e.g., Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, Information and Privacy Commissioner, Human Rights Commission, etc.) have the authority to review our files and interview our staff as a part of their mandates. In these circumstances, we may consult with professionals (e.g., lawyers, accountants) who will investigate the matter and report back to us.
- The cost of some goods/services provided by the organization to clients is paid for by their parties (e.g., OHIP, WSIB, private insurance or Assistive Devices Program). These third-party payers often have your consent or legislative authority to direct us to collect and disclose to them certain information to demonstrate client entitlement to this funding.
- Clients or other individuals we deal with may have questions about our goods or services after they have been received. We also provide ongoing services for many of our clients over a period of months or years for which our previous records are helpful. We retain our client information for a minimum of ten years after the last contact to enable us to respond to those questions and provide these services (our regulatory College also requires us to retain our client records). If **Martel and Mitchell Rehabilitation** or its assets were to be sold, the purchaser would want to conduct a “due diligence” review of the Clinic’s records to ensure that it is a viable business that has been honestly portrayed to the purchaser. This due diligence may involve some review of our accounting and service files. The purchaser would not be able to remove or record personal information. Before being provided access to the files, the purchaser must provide a written promise to keep all personal information confidential. Only reputable purchasers who have already agreed to

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buy the organization's business or its assets would be provided access to personal information, and only for the purpose of completing their due diligence search prior to closing the purchase.

You can choose not to be a part of some of these related or secondary purposes (e.g., by declining to receive of special events or opportunities, by paying for your services in advance). We do not, however, have much choice about some of these related or secondary purposes (e.g., external regulation).

PROTECTING PERSONAL INFORMATION

We understand the importance of protecting personal information. For that reason, we have taken the following steps:

- Paper information is either under supervision or secured in a locked or restricted area.
- Electronic hardware is either under supervision or always secured in a locked or restricted area. Passwords are used on computers, we use a two-point authentication system, and we contract the services of an outside computer agency to monitor our network, and to prevent against virus infiltration or compromising of our data.
- Paper information is transmitted through sealed, addressed envelopes or boxes by reputable companies.
- Electronic information is transmitted either through a direct line or is anonymized or encrypted.
- Staff is trained to collect, use and disclose personal information only as necessary to fulfill their duties and in accordance with our privacy policy.
- External consultants and agencies with access to personal information must enter into privacy agreements with us.
- To prevent snooping, the software used at Martel and Mitchell Rehabilitation has access restrictions, and the Health Information Custodian also performs intermittent audits to search for any occurrences of unauthorized access to personal information by those who are outside of the circle of care.

BREACHES OF CONFIDENTIALITY

In the event that there is a breach of private information, the Health Information Custodian at Martel and Mitchell Rehabilitation (Claude Martel) will be informed, and our policy for dealing with breaches will be followed, and this includes notification of the individual(s) affected by the breach.

RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

We need to retain personal information for some time to ensure that we can answer any questions you might have about the services provided and for our own accountability to external regulatory bodies. However, we do not want to keep personal information too long in order to protect your privacy.

We keep our client files for about ten years. Our client and contact directories are much more difficult to systematically destroy, so we remove such information when we can if it does not appear that we will be contacting you again. However, if you ask, we will remove such contact information right away. We keep any personal information relating to our general correspondence (e.g., with people who are not clients) newsletters, seminars and marketing activities for about six months after the newsletter ceases publication or a seminar or marketing activity is over.

We destroy paper files containing personal information by shredding. We destroy electronic information by deleting it and, when the hardware is discarded, we ensure that the hard drive is physically destroyed. Alternatively, we may send some or the entire client file to our client.

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YOU CAN ACCESS YOUR INFORMATION

With only a few exceptions, you have the right to see what personal information we hold about you. Often, all you have to do is ask. We can help you identify what records we might have about you. We will also try and help you understand any information you do not understand (e.g., short forms, technical language, etc.). We will need to confirm your identity, if we do not know you, before providing you with this access. We reserve the right to charge a fee if you request a copy of your file. We will charge the accepted rate of \$30 for the first 20 pages, and 25 cents per page thereafter. Please be aware that your insurance carrier can ask for a summary of your appointment dates. When submitting invoices to insurance companies there is usually a disclaimer stipulating that they can access this information free of charge.

If there is a problem when you request access to your personal information, we may ask you to put your request in writing. If we cannot give you access, we will tell you within 30 days, if at all possible, and tell you the reason, as best we can, as to why we cannot give you access.

If you believe there is a mistake in the information, you have the right to ask for it to be corrected. This applies to factual information and not to any professional opinions we may have formed. We may ask you to provide documentation that our files are wrong. Where we agree that we made a mistake, we will make the correction and notify anyone to whom we sent this information. If we do not agree that we have made a mistake, we will still agree to include in our file a brief statement from you on the point and we will forward this statement to anyone else who received the earlier information.

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?

Any of our registered clinicians or our Health Information Custodian, Claude Martel, will attempt to answer the questions or concerns you might have.

If you wish to make a formal complaint about our privacy practices, you may make it in writing to Claude Martel Reg. PT or Michael Mitchell Reg. PT. They will acknowledge receipt of your complaint; ensure that it is investigated promptly and that you are provided with a formal decision and reasons in writing.

If you have a concern about the professionalism or competence of our services or the mental or physical capacity of any of our professional staff, we would ask you to discuss those concerns with us. However, if we cannot satisfy your concerns, you are entitled to complain to the appropriate regulatory body depending on the service(s) you wish to address:

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