

Ontario Laboratories Information System– Hamilton Health Sciences Centre

Privacy Impact Assessment Summary

Introduction

A privacy impact assessment on the Ontario Laboratories Information System (OLIS) – Hamilton Health Sciences Centre (HHSC) initiative – was completed as required under Ontario Regulation (O.Reg.) 329/04 under the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 (PHIPA), and by eHealth Ontario’s Personal Health Information Privacy Policy.

OLIS is an information system that connects hospitals, community laboratories, public health laboratories and practitioners across Ontario to facilitate the secure electronic exchange of laboratory test orders and results.

The following is a summary of the privacy impact assessment, including a brief background on the initiative and key findings.

Background

The OLIS-HHSC initiative aligns with eHealth Ontario’s strategy to establish and maintain electronic health records for all Ontarians. eHealth Ontario and HHSC are collaborating to make laboratory information from OLIS available to authorized users of HHSC’s ClinicalConnect – a secure online web portal that provides physicians and clinicians with real-time access to their patients’ lab orders and results from regional hospitals, Community Care Access Centres and oncology centres.

A laboratory information system for Ontario is an important component of electronic health records. The ability to share laboratory test information helps health care providers make fast and better patient care decisions. Implementation of OLIS will result in the following benefits:

- Ensures fewer gaps in patient information as patients move between hospital, practitioner’s office, health care and long-term settings;
- Reduces the number of unnecessary laboratory tests due to greater availability and sharing information;
- Enables timely access to information for improved decision making at the point of care; and
- Improves workflow for health care providers reducing dependency on paper-based systems.

As this project involves providing clinical access to Ontarians’ personal health information, it is guided by Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004.

Summary of Privacy Impact Assessment

The privacy impact assessment confirms that eHealth Ontario has the overall legislative authority under section 6.2 of O.Reg. 329/04 to make OLIS data available to clinicians at participating sites for the purpose of providing or assisting in the provision of health care. Additionally, both eHealth Ontario and HHSC, have robust infrastructures with strong privacy and security safeguards suitable for the processing and sharing of sensitive personal health information.

The PIA recommends measures that will ensure eHealth Ontario is in compliance with applicable legislation, as well as its policies, procedures and best practices.

Summary of Recommendations

The recommendations are summarized below:

1. eHealth Ontario to enter into agreements with HHSC and participating sites accessing OLIS data.
2. Update ClinicalConnect user agreement to stipulate requirements for mobile users to ensure all mobile devices are password protected.

eHealth Ontario is currently in the process of implementing each of these recommendations.

Glossary

HHSC	Hamilton Health Sciences Centre
O.Reg.	Ontario Regulation
OLIS	Ontario Laboratories Information System
PHIPA	Personal Health Information Protection Act

Contact Information

Please contact the eHealth Ontario privacy office should you have any questions about this summary:

eHealth Ontario
Privacy office
777 Bay Street, Suite 701
Toronto Ontario M5B 2E7
Tel: (416) 946-4767
privacy@ehealthontario.on.ca

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