



# Commissioner's *PHIPA* Highlights

By ANN CAVOUKIAN, Ph.D.

INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER/ONTARIO

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## IPC phones keep ringing with questions about Ontario's new health privacy law

I made a commitment to various people in the health sector that I would make regular reports on what was happening with the *Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA)*, which came into force November 1, 2004.

Over the four months from September through December, my office has had call after call about this legislation. We received more than 2,000 calls from the public and professionals in the health sector with questions about *PHIPA* or requests for some of the special publications we had produced about Ontario's first new privacy Act in 14 years.

In total, we have had requests for more than 50,000 copies of these special publications, which include:

- *A Guide to the Personal Health Information Protection Act* (aimed primarily at the health care sector);
- *Frequently Ask Questions: Personal Health Information Protection Act* (primarily aimed at the public);
- *The Personal Health Information Protection Act and You* (a brochure);
- *Your Health Information: Your Rights*, a brochure produced jointly with the Ministry of Health;
- Publications that outline how to file a complaint with my office if you believe your personal health information was incorrectly collected, used or disclosed, or your request for access to, or correction of, your personal health information held by a health information custodian has been denied.

As well, more than 19,000 copies of these publications had been downloaded from our website, as of the end of December.

Along with my Assistant Commissioner for Privacy, Ken Anderson, I have met with the leaders of Ontario's 22 regulatory colleges for health professionals – from the College of Physicians and



Surgeons to the College of Nurses to the College of Chiropractors – and with professional associations.

As well, I have been making presentation after presentation in recent months, as have senior members of my staff, to health professionals and at conferences that are primarily aimed at health professionals and related fields, to outline the role of my office as the oversight agency for *PHIPA*. My philosophy on working with health care providers may be summarized by the approach taken in the “3 Cs:” co-operation, consultation, collaboration.

There is widespread interest in this new law and I am publicly renewing my commitment to working to raise the public's awareness of *PHIPA*.