
Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004

REPORT

FILE NO. HI-050021-1

An Audiology Clinic

Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004

REPORT

FILE NO. HI-050021-1

INVESTIGATOR: Nancy Ferguson

HEALTH INFORMATION CUSTODIAN: An Audiology Clinic

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION GIVING RISE TO THIS REVIEW:

A laptop computer containing patient scheduling information could not be located following a break-in at an audiology clinic (the clinic). There were signs of forced entry on the door to the office where the computer had been located. The clinic reported the matter to police and the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner/Ontario (the IPC), and undertook a consideration of its obligations under the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004* (the Act), including its obligation to provide notice to the affected patients.

RESULTS OF THE REVIEW:

The clinic reported that the scheduling program contained data relating to patients seen over approximately two years of its operation. Patient names and their phone numbers were entered on the computer scheduling program which required that the correct user name and password be entered before the data could be accessed. The clinic confirmed that the computer did not contain any other personal health information.

The clinic advised that it had contacted the owners of the building to ensure physical security measures were implemented to help avoid any future security breach of this nature. The clinic also reported that it was moving shortly to another office location.

The clinic did not have a back-up for all of the patient data on the computer. To determine the names of all the patients with information on the computer would be labour-intensive and would be difficult to accomplish, given the few staff at the clinic.

The clinic determined that the most appropriate method of notification in the circumstances was to place a short notice in two local newspapers. The notice set out that a break-in had occurred

resulting in the theft of a computer which contained scheduling information for clients seen over a two year period. A notice about the incident was also posted at the clinic itself to ensure that the approximately 40 percent of its clients who return for services, were also made aware of the loss.

On the basis of all of the above, it was determined that further review of this matter was not warranted and the file was closed.

Original Signed by: _____
Ann Cavoukian, Ph.D.
Commissioner

_____ March 8, 2006