



## HEMS Health Information Privacy Policy

### Purpose

HEMS undertakes to recognise and observe the principles set out in the Health Information Privacy Code 1994 relating to the collection, use, storage and disclosure of health information about individuals. The code substitutes for the information privacy principles in the Privacy Act 1993.

### Policy

Health Information is to be considered by all employees as information which is confidential, sensitive and of ongoing use.

The Health Information Privacy Code 1994 recognises expectations that health information should be treated differently. It applies specific rules to agencies in the health sector to better ensure the protection of individual privacy.

HEMS undertakes to recognise and observe the rules set out in the Health Information Privacy Code 1994 relating to the collection, use, storage and disclosure of medical information relating to identifiable individuals.

### Health Information Privacy Rules

The rules in the code will be adhered to by all staff and are summarised as follows:

1. Only collect health information if you really need it.
2. Get it straight from the people concerned.
3. Tell them what you're going to do with it.
4. Be considerate when you're getting it.
5. Take care of it once you've got it.
6. People can see their health information if they want to.
7. They can correct it if it's wrong.
8. Make sure health information is correct before you use it.
9. Get rid of it when you're done with it.
10. Use it for the purpose you got it.
11. Only disclose it if you have a good reason.
12. Only assign unique identifiers where permitted.

### Storage and Security of Health Information

#### Physical Security

All health information on Base will be physically stored in locked cabinets or room only accessible by authorised personnel. A swipe card access register is maintained and monitored adhering to the organisations guidelines.

Once gathered, medical information is scanned into the secure document storage system and destroyed by way of reputable externally contracted document destruction organisation.

When viewing medical information staff will take all practicable steps to ensure that information cannot be seen by unauthorised personnel. Staff will act in accordance with the IT Policy at all times.

## **Operational Security**

All Employee Employment Agreements will state requirement to adhere to this Policy – existing employees will be required to read and comply with the Policy.

Where any medical information is required to be transported by HEMS employees it will be done by way of encoded memory stick or secured/locked briefcase.

Health information will not be gathered or discussed by employees in public areas or in front of members of the public or other unauthorised employees.

## **Technical Security**

Personnel system access will be recorded and organisational rules on levels of access applied, including steps to ensure that access to different categories of information is available only to authorised users. Anti-theft hardware and software is installed on laptops and updated regularly.

Passwords are to be:

- i. At least six characters in length;
- ii. Cannot contain the user name or parts of the user's full name, such as first name.
- iii. At least three of the four available character types: lowercase letters, uppercase letters, number and symbols;
- iv. Changed every 6 months

Document Management System requirements will exceed the minimum recommendations required by the Public Records Act 2005.

## **Training**

All employees who deal with health information will undergo training on requirements of the collection, storage and protection of medical information using the Privacy Commissioners guidelines.

All employees will be familiar with their requirements to adhere to the organisations relevant policies and procedures and the consequences where found in breach.

## **Complaints**

Complaints about a breach of privacy can be made:

- i. via the Privacy Commissioners website [www.privacy.org.nz](http://www.privacy.org.nz);
- ii. By phone 0800 803 909
- iii. In writing to: The Privacy Commissioner PO Box 10094 Wellington

## **Relevant Law**

Health Information Privacy Code 1994  
Privacy Act 1993  
Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000  
Health Act 1956  
Health and Disability Commissioner Act 1994  
Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003

Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992,  
Interpretation Act 1999;  
Care of Children Act 2004.