

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT AND PHYSIOTHERAPIST ASSISTANT EDUCATION ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

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### POLICY & PROCEDURES ACC-06: ELECTRONIC STORAGE OF CONFIDENTIAL DATA

#### PREAMBLE

In Canada, the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act<sup>1</sup> (PIPEDA) governs personal information stored electronically. It specifies the rules to govern collection, use or disclosure of the personal information in the course of recognizing the right of privacy of individuals with respect to their personal information. It also specifies the rules for the organizations to collect, use, and disclose personal information. While the Occupational Therapist Assistant & Physiotherapist Assistant Education Accreditation Program (OTA & PTA EAP) does not collect personal information specifically, it does collect significant amounts confidential information about education programs which the OTA & PTA EAP is entrusted to protect.

The Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada (OPC) has developed guidelines<sup>2</sup> to explain how the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) applies to transfers of personal information to a third party, including a third party operating outside of Canada, for processing. One of the key findings:

*“It is important for organizations to assess the risks that could jeopardize the integrity, security and confidentiality of customer personal information when it is transferred to third-party service providers operating outside of Canada.”*

The OTA & PTA EAP gathers confidential organizational information including sensitive financial, educational, and academic data from programs and about individuals in those programs. It is the OTA & PTA EAP's responsibility to ensure that this data is securely stored and that its security is at no time jeopardized by third party service providers such as website servers, “cloud” servers and other data management strategies, especially those operating outside of Canada.

#### 1.0 POLICY

- 1.1 PEAC is responsible for the administration of the OTA & PTA EAP. PEAC holds contracts with a third-party data service provider (“vendor”) only if/when
  - a. a privacy risk-assessment has been completed

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<sup>1</sup> PIPEDA can be found at this link: <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/P-8.6/>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.priv.gc.ca/information/guide/2009/gl\\_dab\\_090127\\_e.cfm](http://www.priv.gc.ca/information/guide/2009/gl_dab_090127_e.cfm)

- b. the terms of service agreement with the vendor are robust around security measure, systems, and processes
  - c. the vendor uses sound encryption methods
- 1.2 All OTA & PTA EAP volunteers (Joint Accreditation Committee members, Peer Review Team members) must store confidential information only with OTA & PTA EAP approved third-party data service providers.
- 1.3 All OTA & PTA EAP volunteers (Joint Accreditation Committee members, Peer Review Team members) must store confidential information on computers (desktop/laptop/tablets) to which access is password protected.
- 1.4 All OTA & PTA EAP volunteers must:
- use only USB keys which are password protected (ie. which require the use of a password in order to access the files saved on the USB key)  
AND/OR
  - add password protection to individual documents
- 1.5 All OTA & PTA EAP volunteers must transmit confidential documents only when the document itself has been password protected. The password must be sent in a separate email.

## 2.0 PROCEDURES

- 2.1 OTA & PTA EAP will contract and/or use database servers located only in Canada for its data storage and document viewing.
- 2.2 OTA & PTA EAP will provide information to OTA & PTA EAP volunteers (Joint Accreditation Committee members, Peer Review Team members) regarding approved data management methods.
- 2.3 All Peer Review Team volunteers will be required to review and sign [FORM-04 Confidentiality Agreement - PRT](#), prior to receiving access to any confidential material.
- 2.4 All Joint Accreditation Committee volunteers will be required to review and sign [FORM-05 Confidentiality Agreement - JAC](#), prior to receiving access to any confidential material.
- 2.5 OTA & PTA EAP will notify all Joint Accreditation Committee members and Peer Review Team members when confidential data must be destroyed following conclusion of an accreditation review process, and request confirmation of destruction.
- 2.6 Peer Review Team members and ad-hoc committee members will be required to complete and submit [FORM-06 – Confirmation of Document Disposal – PRT](#) when requested following destruction of confidential materials.

- 2.7 Joint Accreditation Committee members and ad-hoc committee members will be required to complete and submit [FORM-06 – Confirmation of Document Disposal - JAC](#) when requested following destruction of confidential materials.

### 3.0 GUIDELINES

- 3.1 Consideration should be given to the following variations of data management:
- Website and email hosting providers
  - Online fax services
  - Off-site back up services
  - Cloud-based document viewers/editors (Google Drive, DropBox, Microsoft 365)
  - Cloud-based email servers – Mobile Outlook, Gmail, Yahoo mail

Policy Number: ACC-06	
Date of last revision	Associated documents
November 2016	<a href="#">Program Accreditation Handbook</a>
	<a href="#">PRT Accreditation Handbook</a>
	<a href="#">FORM-04 – Confidentiality Agreement - PRT</a>
	<a href="#">FORM-05 – Confidentiality Agreement – JAC</a>
	<a href="#">FORM-06 - Confirmation of Document Disposal - PRT</a>
	<a href="#">FORM-06 – Confirmation of Document Disposal - JAC</a>