



Show you **C·A·R·E**, take these steps before you share:

1 - How do I “Confirm Purpose”?

Staff are required to share confidential information on a daily basis to provide healthcare and supporting services. Although the purpose for sharing confidential information with authorized colleagues or affiliates is clear in most circumstances, there are situations when it can be challenging to determine if it is appropriate to share. The first step is always to “Confirm Purpose”.

Q: What does “Confirm Purpose” mean?

A: Confirming Purpose means asking the requesting person (as appropriate to the situation) and/or yourself *before* you share confidential information: “Are you requesting and am I sharing it for the **legitimate purpose of providing care or services to the individual?**”

Q: What if I am not sure I am sharing it for the purposes of providing care or services?

A: If it is not clear to you that you are sharing confidential information for care or services, first:

- review [Policy 1.5.1](#),
- check it out with your supervisor, or if not available
- contact the ISAP via phone or email below.

Depending on the nature and specifics of the situation, it may require additional assessment and approval by key personnel before release (e.g., [The Information Steward](#), [ISAP](#), and/or [Risk Management](#)).

Q: What are some examples of a Confirmed Legitimate Purpose?

A: Here are two examples of legitimately sharing confidential information for the purpose of providing care or services:

- When a patient is transferred from in-patient care to a residential facility, the receiving facility requests a copy of relevant portions of the patient’s chart in order to continue care delivery.
- The Human Resources Business Partner legitimately shares limited and specific employee information with Wellness and Safety staff in order to process an employee’s disability claim.

Other situations that may require information sharing include: approved research studies (when patient consent has been obtained) or, to comply with other laws (e.g., in response to a court order or subpoena).

Q: What is VIHA Policy on sharing confidential information?

A: The main policies are [1.5.1](#), [1.5.2](#), and [1.5.3](#). Section 2.2 of Policy 1.5.1 states: “Client information in Island Health is collected and used for the provision of care or a healthcare related service.” The policy flows from the requirements of the BC *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Protection Act* (FIPPA), which permits the sharing of personal information only for the purposes for which it was originally collected or a purpose consistent with that. **If in doubt, CHECK IT OUT: privacy@viha.ca**

Caring for information is caring for people Respect privacy – Protect personal information

Island Health Information Stewardship, Access & Privacy

Phone: 1.877.748.2290

Email: privacy@viha.ca

<https://intranet.viha.ca/departments/privacy>

IM/IT Security

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