



Thunder Bay Regional  
Health Sciences  
Centre

## Privacy Notice: *Misdirected Emails*



From the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario's blog...

“Misdirected emails are a very common source of privacy breaches due to unauthorized disclosure of personal information. In the health sector, the number of breaches resulting from these types of incidents has grown from just over 430 in 2018, to more than 960 in 2020. Errors are part of human nature, and sending out an email with the wrong attachment or to the wrong recipients is probably not new to most of us.

- Mishandled emails can cause harmful embarrassment or humiliation for the individuals whose personal information is involved and can expose them to significant risks such as identity theft, cyberattacks, discrimination, and possibly social stigmatization.
- Consequences for employees who commit the error can also be quite serious, including termination of employment and disciplinary action by professional associations.
- Organizations can face fines, civil lawsuits, and reputational damage resulting from a loss of public trust in their ability to keep personal information secure.

The IPC's fact sheet on *Communicating Personal Health Information by Email* highlights some important safeguards for protecting personal information that can be applied any time information is sent by email.”

**Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (the Hospital) has an email policy, IS-USE-001-N, which can be found on the iNtranet. All staff, professional staff, volunteers, affiliates and others are reminded to exercise caution when using email to transmit sensitive information (such as personal information, personal health information or corporate information).**

**How do I contact the Privacy Office?** Call us at x6988 or email us at [TBRprivacy@tbh.net](mailto:TBRprivacy@tbh.net) with any questions! **Questions?** Let us know! **Suggestions of topics you'd like to learn more about?** Tell us! Contact: [TBRprivacy@tbh.net](mailto:TBRprivacy@tbh.net)