OFFICE OF THE INFORMATION & PRIVACY COMMISSIONER FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA

News Release

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Information and Privacy Commissioner confirms health authority updates following snooping incidents related to Lapu Lapu Day Festival

VICTORIA – Following a February 2026 investigation report that revealed 71 snooping incidents by 36 healthcare workers related to the 2025 Lapu Lapu Day Festival, Information and Privacy Commissioner Michael Harvey has confirmed that the health authorities involved (the Fraser Health Authority, the Provincial Health Services Authority, and Vancouver Coastal Health) have addressed the nine recommendations issued in the report.

The investigation report found that the breaches violated section 25.1 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA), which prohibits unauthorized disclosure of personal information. The Commissioner also found that notification to affected individuals did not occur without unreasonable delay. However, the Commissioner also found that the health authorities have and can build on reasonable safeguards to protect patient data.

The report included nine recommendations to mitigate the breach, strengthen safeguards, and prevent snooping, including:

- Continuing efforts to deploy automated software, with a focus on real-time alert generation and automated access prevention, where possible;
- Reviewing role-based access controls, including efforts to prevent access rights from being inherited or mistakenly applied;
- Notifying affected individuals; and
- Applying disciplinary measures for snooping that are strong enough to effectively sanction and deter snooping, including notifying regulatory colleges as required or appropriate.

Based on updates provided by the health authorities outlining steps taken since the release of the report, the Commissioner is satisfied that the recommendations have been fulfilled, and that these actions demonstrate the commitment and work the health authorities have taken to address snooping.

“While there is no cure-all for snooping, I am confident that the measures taken reduce the likelihood of snooping going forward, and better position the Health Authorities to respond effectively when it does. Their response should foster public trust in the system’s ability to safeguard personal health information,” said Commissioner Harvey.

Two additional recommendations for government continue to be a priority, which Commissioner Harvey will re-advance to the new Minister of Health once appointed. The first is for government to develop rules or legislation, that clarify lines of accountability for public and private healthcare organizations that share our data. This is important for both the protection of that data, and for a timely and effective breach response to privacy breaches that affect staff or patients across organizations.

The second recommendation is for government to add a reporting requirement in BC's *Health Professions Act*, or in stand-alone health information legislation. The requirement would compel healthcare employers to report privacy violations that result in a suspension or termination to the employee's professional college. The requirement, already enshrined in Ontario's legislation, would inform professional standards and training, could assist in identifying a pattern of snooping, and would promote individual accountability amongst regulated health professionals.

Together, these recommendations would provide additional protections for our healthcare data and clarify rules so employers are better able to understand and apply those protections.

The full report is available here: https://www.oipc.bc.ca/reports/investigation-and-audit-reports/

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