

## Privacy laws not to blame

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Suicide case tied to privacy law

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Let's be clear: Privacy laws did not prevent Carleton University counsellors or the campus doctor from contacting Nadia Kajouji's family if they had concerns that she was going to commit suicide. Yes, institutions such as Carleton and staff providing health-care services fall under Ontario's privacy laws. But these laws clearly permit the disclosure of personal information without consent under certain circumstances, such as where it is necessary to eliminate or reduce a significant risk of serious bodily harm.

In light of this tragic event, I urge all those who are responsible for the health and safety of others to read my fact sheet, "[Disclosure of Information Permitted in Emergency or Other Urgent Circumstances](#)," issued in 2005, available at [www.ipc.on.ca](http://www.ipc.on.ca).

I have tried repeatedly to get this message out, so please don't blame privacy laws. The problem lies with the default of non-disclosure and inaction.

**Ann Cavoukian**, Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, Toronto