

144.053 RESEARCH STUDIES CONFIDENTIAL.

Subdivision 1. **Status of data collected by commissioner.** All information, records of interviews, written reports, statements, notes, memoranda, or other data procured by the state commissioner of health, in connection with studies conducted by the state commissioner of health, or carried on by the said commissioner jointly with other persons, agencies or organizations, or procured by such other persons, agencies or organizations, for the purpose of reducing the morbidity or mortality from any cause or condition of health shall be confidential and shall be used solely for the purposes of medical or scientific research.

Subd. 2. **Limits on use and disclosure.** Such information, records, reports, statements, notes, memoranda, or other data shall not be admissible as evidence in any action of any kind in any court or before any other tribunal, board, agency or person. Such information, records, reports, statements, notes, memoranda, or other data shall not be exhibited nor their contents disclosed in any way, in whole or in part, by any representative of the state commissioner of health, nor by any other person, except as may be necessary for the purpose of furthering the research project to which they relate. No person participating in such research project shall disclose, in any manner, the information so obtained except in strict conformity with such research project. No employee of said commissioner shall interview any patient named in any such report, nor a relative of any such patient, unless the consent of the attending physician and surgeon is first obtained.

Subd. 3. **No liability for giving information.** The furnishing of such information to the state commissioner of health or an authorized representative, or to any other cooperating agency in such research project, shall not subject any person, hospital, sanitarium, nursing home or other person or agency furnishing such information, to any action for damages or other relief.

Subd. 4. **Violation a misdemeanor.** Any disclosure other than is provided for in this section, is hereby declared to be a misdemeanor and punishable as such.

Subd. 5. **Personally identifying information.** The commissioner of health or the commissioner's agent is not required to solicit information that personally identifies persons selected to participate in an epidemiologic study if the commissioner determines that:

(1) the study monitors incidence or prevalence of a serious disease to detect potential health problems and predict risks, provides specific information to develop public health strategies to prevent serious disease, enables the targeting of intervention resources for communities, patients, or groups at risk of the disease, and informs health professionals about risks, early detection, or treatment of the disease;

(2) the personally identifying information is not necessary to validate the quality, accuracy, or completeness of the study; or

(3) the collection of personally identifying information may seriously jeopardize the validity of study results, as demonstrated by an epidemiologic study.

History: 1955 c 769 s 1-4; 1976 c 173 s 31; 1977 c 305 s 45; 1986 c 444; 1988 c 689 art 2 s 29