

Privacy Policy

Current as of 4th February 2021

Introduction

This privacy policy is to provide information to you, our patient, on how your personal information (which includes your health information) is collected and used within our practice, and the circumstances in which we may share it with third parties.

Why and when your consent is necessary

When you register as a patient of our practice, you provide consent for our GPs and practice staff to access and use your personal information so they can provide you with the best possible healthcare. Only staff who need to see your personal information will have access to it. If we need to use your information for anything else, we will seek additional consent from you to do this.

Why do we collect, use, hold and share your personal information?

Our practice will need to collect your personal information to provide healthcare services to you. Our main purpose for collecting, using, holding and sharing your personal information is to manage your health. We also use it for directly related business activities, such as financial claims and payments, practice audits, accreditation and business processes (eg staff training).

What personal information do we collect?

The information we collect about you includes your:

- Names, date of birth, addresses, contact details.
- Medical information including medical history, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors.
- Medicare number (where available) for identification and claiming purposes.
- Healthcare identifiers.
- Health fund details.

Dealing with us anonymously

You have the right to deal with us anonymously or under a pseudonym unless it is impracticable for us to do so or unless we are required or authorised by law to only deal with identified individuals.

How do we collect your personal information?

Our practice may collect your personal information in several different ways.

1. When you make your first appointment our practice staff will collect your personal and demographic information via your registration.
2. During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information.
 - Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions
 - My Health Records/PCEHR system
3. We may also collect your personal information when you visit our website, send us an email or SMS, telephone us or make an online appointment.

4. In some circumstances personal information may also be collected from other sources. Often this is because it is not practical or reasonable to collect it from you directly. This may include information from:
- Your guardian or responsible person.
 - Other involved healthcare providers, such as specialists, allied health professionals, hospitals, community health services and pathology and diagnostic imaging services.
 - Your health fund, Medicare, or the Department of Veterans' Affairs (as necessary).

When, why and with whom do we share your personal information?

We sometimes share your personal information:

- With third parties who work with our practice for business purposes, such as accreditation agencies or information technology providers – these third parties are required to comply with APPs and this policy.
- With other healthcare providers.
- When it is required or authorised by law (e.g., court subpoenas).
- When it is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to a patient's life, health or safety or public health or safety, or it is impractical to obtain the patient's consent.
- To assist in locating a missing person.
- To establish, exercise or defend an equitable claim.
- For the purpose of confidential dispute resolution process.
- When there is a statutory requirement to share certain personal information (e.g., some diseases require mandatory notification).
- During the course of providing medical services, through eTP, My Health Record (e.g., via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary).

Only people who need to access your information will be able to do so. Other than in the course of providing medical services or as otherwise described in this policy, our practice will not share personal information with any third party without your consent.

We will not share your personal information with anyone outside Australia (unless under exceptional circumstances that are permitted by law) without your consent.

Our practice will not use your personal information for marketing any of our goods or services directly to you without your express consent. If you do consent, you may opt out of direct marketing at any time by notifying our practice in writing.

Our practice may use your personal information to improve the quality of the services we offer to our patients through research and analysis of our patient data.

We may provide de-identified data to other organisations to improve population health outcomes. The information is secure, patients cannot be identified, and the information is stored within Australia. You can let our reception staff know if you do not want your information included.

Appropriate access to patient health records and/or other official documents

Staff have a responsibility to use patient information only for its intended purpose and for the benefit of the patients. Access to patient records is given to members of the practice team so that they can perform their roles and provide efficient service to the patients and other team members.

All official documents, including prescription forms, administrative records, templates and letterhead are stored securely in an area where patients do not have access.

How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information is stored at our practice as electronic records. All paper correspondence will be scanned into your electronic file. Australian privacy legislation applies to all personal health information recorded in electronic and paper records.

Our practice stores all personal information securely. This is stored in electronic format with protected encrypted systems. All staff and contractors agree and sign a confidentiality agreement and are allocated secure passwords.

How can you access and correct your personal information at our practice?

You have the right to request access to, and correction of, your personal information.

Our practice acknowledges patients may request access to their medical records. Patients who wish to access or obtain a copy of their personal information should put their request in writing using our Request to Access Personal Information Form, address this to the Practice Manager and submit the form to our Practice reception. All requests will be acknowledged by contacting the patient within 7 days of receipt of the request. Ordinarily, access to the requested information will be provided within 14 days or once payment has been received if applicable. They must make an appointment to see their Doctor in order to view their medical record. If they would like a copy, a fee will be charged for photocopying depending on the size of their medical record.

Our practice will take reasonable steps to correct your personal information where the information is not accurate or up to date. From time to time, we will ask you to verify that your personal information held by our practice is correct and current. At each visit, medical reception staff will ask you 3 forms of identification e.g., Name, DOB and address. This is to confirm we have the correct person booked in. You may also request that we correct or update your information and you should make such requests at time of consultation or in writing to Joanne Kennedy – Practice Manager email: reception@yourhealthmedical.com.au.

How to have your medical records transferred to another practice?

In accordance with *QLD State* and federal privacy legislation, any request received from another general practice/practitioner to transfer patient health records from our practice must be signed by the patient giving us authority to transfer their record.

The request from the receiving practice needs to contain the:

- Name of the receiving practitioner or practice
- Patient's name, address (both current and former if applicable) and date of birth
- Patient's signature

This request is given to the Doctors to action and this is completed within 2 business days. When fulfilling this request, the doctor will inform us what medical information needs to be sent. We always email the requesting practice a Patient Health Summary and letter explaining cost.

Our practice does not allow individuals to collect a copy of their health record to take to their new provider.

How can you lodge a privacy-related complaint, and how will the complaint be handled at our practice?

We take complaints and concerns regarding privacy seriously. You should express any privacy concerns you may have in writing. We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with our resolution procedure. Please forward your letter to Your Health Medical Centre, 10 Foote Street, Acacia Ridge QLD-4110 and address it to the Practice Manager or you can send an email to reception@yourhealthmedical.com.au We will endeavor to address your complaint within 30 days.

You may also contact the OAIC. Generally, the OAIC will require you to give them time to respond before they will investigate. For further information visit www.oaic.gov.au or call the OAIC on 1300 363 992.

Further information on privacy legislation is available from:

Contacts

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

1300 363 992
www.oaic.gov.au

Office of the Information Commissioner

Queensland – 07 3234 7373
www.oic.qld.gov.au

Office of the Health Ombudsman

GPO Box 13281 George Street
 Brisbane QLD 4003
 Phone: 133 646
 Fax: (07) 3319-6350
 Email: communications@oho.qld.gov.au
www.oho.qld.gov.au

Privacy and our website

Communication with patients via electronic means (e.g. email and Fax) is conducted with appropriate regard to the privacy Laws relating to health information and confidentiality of the patients' health information.

Internal or external parties, including patients may send electronic messages. Messages from patients or those of clinical significance require a response to confirm receipt and should be documented in the patient medial record if appropriate.

Staff and Patients using email/SMS or other forms of electronic messaging should be aware that it is not possible to guarantee that electronic communications will be private.

The practice uses an email disclaimer notice on outgoing emails that are affiliated with the practice.

**This email message and any accompanying attachments may contain information that is confidential and is subject to legal privilege. It should be read only by those persons it is addressed to and its content is not intended for use by any other persons. If you received this message (and any attachments) in error, please notify me immediately. Please also destroy and delete from your computer. Any unauthorised form of reproduction of this message is strictly prohibited. Your Health Medical Centre accepts no liability for any loss caused either directly or indirectly by a virus arising from the use of this message or any attached file.*

Privacy during COVID-19 Telehealth phone consultations.

Medicare now provides incentives and rebates for medical practitioners to engage with patients via phone consultations in specific circumstances.

Phone consultations are an alternative to face-to-face consultations and may be of particular benefit for patients and practitioners during the COVID 19 restrictions and self-isolation.

For all telehealth phone consultations, we will always confirm your identity using 3 forms of identification.

Consent will be gained by your Doctor that you are aware and happy for the consultation billing is sent directly to Medicare.

If your Doctor wishes to see you face to face a further appointment will be made for you to come into the practice.

Doctors will keep full notes of their consults with patients as though the patient was sitting in the room with them. Practitioners at the patient-end must keep records of the consultations that specifically document that the service was performed by phone consultation, the time taken to conduct the consultation, the people who participated in the consultation and confirmation from the patient.

Policy review statement

Our policy is reviewed regularly to ensure it is in accordance with any practice changes that may occur. We will notify you of any changes to our policy at your next visit, on our Practice information brochure and update your consent in your electronic file.