Privacy and Security of Personal Health Information

Privacy policy

Current as of: 18th December 2024

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 at 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 and accreditation, and business processes (eg staff training).

What personal information do we collect?

The information we will collect about you includes:

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.

Note: The Privacy Act requires us to provide patients with the option of not identifying themselves, or of using a pseudonym, when dealing with us (Australian Privacy Principle 1 & 2) unless it is impracticable for you to do so.

How do we collect your personal information?

Our practice will collect your personal information:

When you make your first appointment our practice staff will collect your personal and demographic information via your registration.

During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information.

Information can also be collected through Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (eTP), My Health Record/PCEHR system, eg via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary. You will need to specify if your practice participates in any of these eHealth services.

We may also collect your personal information when you visit our website, send us an email or SMS, telephone us, make an online appointment or communicate with us using social media.

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 Veteran's Affairs (as necessary).

Who do we share your personal information with?

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 (eg some diseases require mandatory notification)

During the course of providing medical services, through Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (eTP), MyHealth Record/PCEHR system (eg via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary).

Only people that 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.

How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information may be stored at our practice in electronic format only.

Our practice stores all personal information securely.

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. We require you to put this request in writing in person, mail or email. All requests must be accompanied by photo ID and our practice will respond within a reasonable time (10 working days). There is an administration cost of $33.00 for a full copy of medical records and $10 for a series of test results or health summary

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 your personal information held by our practice is correct and up-to-date. You may also request that we correct or update your information, and you should make such requests in writing to

privacy@topendmedicalcentre.com.au (Casuarina)

privacyrb@topendmedicalcentre.com.au (Rosebery)

privacysp@topendmedicalcentre.com.au (Stuart Park)

privacygw@topendmedicalcentre.com.au (Gateway)

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.

Casuarina:

managercas@topendmedicalcentre.com.au

PO BOX 766 Nightcliff, NT 0814

08 8995 7900

Stuart Park

managersp@topendmedicalcentre.com.au

PO BOX 98 Parap NT 0820

08 8930 4900

Rosebery

managerrb@topendmedicalcentre.com.au

PO BOX 396 NT 0831

08 8997 6500

Gateway

managergw@topendmedicalcentre.com.au

PO BOX 396, NT 0831

08 7922 8000

All complaints will be replied to 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 336 002. Or Health and Community Service Complaints Commissioner 08 8991906 or 1800 004 474

Privacy and our website

We do not collect any information on our website

Policy review statement

This policy will be reviewed annually, our patients will be made aware of any changes through our website and our privacy brochure available in the clinic