

PRIVACY POLICY

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 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.

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. This includes through My Health Record/PCER system and other eHealth 2 services, eg. via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary. Woodleigh Waters Medical Clinic participates in these eHealth services.
- We may also collect your personal information when you send us an email, telephone us, make an appointment or otherwise communicate with us.

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.
- 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 (eg. 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 MyHealth Record/PCEHR system (eg. via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary) and other eHealth services.

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.

How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information may be stored at our practice in various forms, eg. as paper records, as electronic records, as visual (X-rays, CT scans, videos and photos).

Our practice stores all personal information securely, eg. in electronic format, in protected information systems or in hard copy format in a secured environment.

All our staff and contractors who may have access to personal information are required to sign confidentiality agreements. All staff have their own passwords to access confidential information electronically and each person's password is not permitted to be shared with any other person.

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 and our practice will respond within a reasonable time. Reasonable fees which reflect the costs of complying with your request may be charged by us in providing this information to you. However, patients will not be charged for making the request.

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 up-to-date. You may also request that we correct or update your information, and you should make such requests in writing to us.

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 to us at the address found at the top of this page.

We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with our resolution procedure. You may also contact the OAIC (Office of the Australian Information Commissioner). Generally, the OAIC will require you to give them time to respond, before they will investigate. For further information visit <https://www.oaic.gov.au/> or call the OAIC on 1300 336 002.

Policy review statement

This privacy policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur.