

Privacy Policy

Name of Privacy officer: Practice Manager

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.

The Privacy Policy of this practice is defined by the Privacy Act of 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles (APP).

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?

The practice collects, uses, stores, and shares your personal information primarily to manage your health safely and effectively. This includes providing healthcare services, managing medical records, and ensuring accurate billing and payments. Additionally, we may utilise your information for internal quality and safety improvement processes such as practice audits, accreditation purposes, and staff training to maintain high-quality service standards.

What personal information do we collect?

The information we will collect about you includes your:

- names, date of birth, addresses, contact details, next-of-kin details
- ethnicity and cultural background
- billing/account 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

Dealing with us anonymously

According to the Australian Privacy Policy (APP 2), 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.
3. Information can also be collected through electronic prescribing, electronic referrals, online appointments or My Health Record, e.g. via Shared Health or Event Summary, where we have your consent for accessing the information.
4. We may also collect your personal information when you send us an email or SMS, telephone us or send us a fax.
5. In some circumstances personal information may also be collected from other sources, and forms part of your health record at this practice. 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 Veterans' Affairs, Insurance companies or health funds (as necessary)

Various types of images may be collected and used, including:

- CCTV footage: Collected from our premises for security and safety purposes
- Photos and medical images: These can be taken using personal devices for medical purposes with your consent. They may be transferred to your medical record and will be deleted from the device.

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 or third parties involved in your health management
- 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 electronic prescribing, electronic referrals, 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. Access to patient records is given to member of the practice team so that they can perform their roles and provide efficient services to the patients and other team members. Staff have a responsibility to use patient information only for its intended purpose and for the benefit of the patients.

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

Will your information be used for marketing purposes?

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

How is your information used to improve services?

The practice undertakes continuous quality improvement processes and may use personal information to improve the quality of services offered to patients through research, analysis of patient data used directly for quality improvement and for staff training activities.

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

The practice may participate in third party research studies which requires access to identifiable patient information. In these instances, practice staff will seek permission from the selected patients to discuss your participation. Researchers will not receive information or approach patients directly without your express consent. If you provide consent to participate, you will then receive further information on the research project and how your health information will be used.

How are document automation technologies used?

Document automation is where our practice clinical software program uses existing data from patient health records to generate documents relating to medical conditions and healthcare.

The practice uses document automation technologies to create documents such as referrals, which are sent to other healthcare providers as part of patients ongoing care. These documents only contain medical information relevant to the purpose of the document.



The secure medical software used by the practice is Best Practice Medical Software, all users have their own individual user and passwords, access may be limited as relevant to the roles of the practice team.

The practice complies with the Australian privacy legislation and APPs to protect your information.

All data, both electronic and paper are stored and managed in accordance with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Privacy and managing health information guidance.

How are Artificial intelligence (AI) Scribes used?

Providers at the practice may use AI Scribe tools to support their practice in taking notes during their consultation with you. The AI scribe uses an audio recording of your consultation to generate a clinical note for your health record. Practitioners utilising AI scribe tools have the autonomy to use a program of their choice, where possible, ensuring the program meets the following criteria;

- does not share information outside of Australia
- destroys the audio file once the transcription is complete
- removes sensitive, personal identifying information as part of the transcript

The practice will only use data from digital scribe service to provide healthcare to you.

How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information will be stored securely in electronic records on a secure database. Staff are bound by strict confidentiality requirements as a condition of employment. Hard copy records are uploaded to the electronic database and destroyed via confidential waste management. Our practice team have individual user and password access for all protected systems allowing limited access within the scope of their role.

The practice CCTV stores recorded footage for 14 days, storing this onto a hard disk at the practice which is accessible only by those with login permissions. Our CCTV footage covers the practice entrances, wait rooms and walkways. Consulting, bathrooms, and treatment rooms are excluded.

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.

The practice acknowledges patients may request access to their medical records. Requests are to be made in writing with your name, date of birth, address, contact details and Medicare number (if applicable) on a signed letter, and our practice will respond within a reasonable timeframe (generally within 30 days from receipt of request). A fee may be charged for printing/photocopying, staff time involved in processing your request and postage.



The 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. You may also request that we correct or update your information, however original medical records will not be erased.

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 the Practice Manager, View Street Medical, 16 View St North Perth WA 6006. We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with our resolution procedure. To speak directly to our Practice Manager, call (08) 9227 0170 or fax your written complaint to (08) 9227 0171. We will endeavour to respond within 30 days from receipt of complaint.

You may also contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC). 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.

Policy review statement

This privacy policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with current obligations.

Changes to this policy will be reflected on our website, or significant changes may be communicated directly to patients.

If you have any questions please get in touch with the practice.