

## 2.1 Patient Privacy Policy

We recognise that the information we collect is often of a highly sensitive nature and as an organisation we have adopted the highest privacy compliance standards relevant to ensure personal information is protected.

We are a GP practice who provides services for patients at our clinics. For administrative and billing purposes, and to enable the patient to be attended by other practitioners in our practice, patient information is shared between the practitioners who attend a patient.

We may collect personal information (including health information) regarding patients for the purpose of providing medical services and treatment to patients. Personal information collected will generally include: the patient's name, address, telephone number and NHI number; current drugs or treatments used by the patient; previous and current medical history, including where clinically relevant a family medical history, and the name of any health service provider or medical specialist to whom the patient is referred, copies of any letters of referrals and copies of any reports back.

We may access information:

- provided directly by the patient;
- provided on the patient's behalf with the patient's consent;
- from a health service provider who refers the patient to medical practitioners
- from health service providers to whom patients are referred.

Personal information collected by us may be used or disclosed:

- for the purpose the patient was advised of at the time of collection of the information by us;
- as required for delivery of the health service to the patient;
- as required for the ordinary operation of our services (i.e. to refer the patient to a medical specialist or other health service provider);
- as required under compulsion of law; or
- where there is a serious and imminent threat to an individual's life, health, or safety; or
- a serious threat to public health or public safety.

Other than as described in this Policy or permitted under the Privacy Act, the Practice uses its reasonable endeavours to ensure that identifying health information is not disclosed to any person.

We keep health information for a minimum of 10 years from the date of last entry in the patient record (unless the patient was a child in which case the record must be kept until the patient attains or would have attained 25 years of age). This is because we are required to maintain such records as required by law.

Practitioners who provide services at our practices may refer patients to the following services:

- pathology services
- radiology services;
- public hospitals;
- private hospitals;
- day procedure centres;
- allied health services – specialist medical practitioners and other health providers involved in the relevant patient's care which may include surgeons, nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, psychologists, dietitians, audiologists, podiatrists and the ambulance service.

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We also collect information about the medical practitioners who provide services at our practices. This information is collected directly from or with the agreement of the medical practitioner. This information includes the name, address, qualifications and experience of the medical practitioner.

Information on the Privacy Act is easily accessible to clients upon request and is explained clearly to consumers if so requested.

To ensure that each client is aware of the Policies and Procedures in regard to Privacy this information is included in the Information Package which is given to each new client.

The Health and Disability Service have produced information regarding Rights and Privacy in a multitude of media formats which will be explained to the client upon orientation to the services.

**Accessing your information, complaints and obtaining further information.**

If an individual wishes to:

- complain to us about a breach of privacy; or
  - access his or her own information held by us; or
  - correct any information held by us concerning his or her own information; or
  - find out more about how we deal with personal information, that individual can contact their GP clinics directly.
- The practice team receives training on the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993 and Health Information Privacy Code 1994 every 5 years.

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