



(1) 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.

(2) Why and when your consent is necessary

When you register as a patient of our practice, you provide consent for our GP's and necessary 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, practice audits and accreditation and business processes (e.g. staff training).

(3) What personal information do we collect?

The information we collect about you includes:

- Names, date of birth, addresses, contact details, next of kin and emergency contacts
- Medical information including medical history, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social and family history and risk factors
- Healthcare identifiers for communicating with your My Health Record
- Land line and mobile phone numbers (we will ask for your explicit consent to communicate with you using SMS)
- You may provide an email address if you wish, however, we will only respond to a directly received email in which the request must be stated. This is to ensure we have your consent (the requesting email) and the correct email address. EFP reserves the right to choose the circumstances of which contact will be made. No consultations (including asking a question), scripts or referral requests, or appointments will be dealt with via email.

(4) Dealing with us anonymously

Wherever it is lawful and practicable patients may seek to obtain our services anonymously. There may be circumstances where providing healthcare services anonymously may not be possible. If a patient requests this service they will be directed to speak with the Practice Manager prior to accessing healthcare in our clinic.

(5) How do we collect your personal information?

Our practice will collect your personal information

1. When you make your first appointment, our practice staff will collect your personal and demographic information via your "New patient registration form".
2. During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information
3. We participate in the My Health Record system. You may ask for information to be supplied regarding this Government service. You will be asked each time you present to the GP if you would like your shared health summary uploaded
4. 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 electronic or social media.
5. 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 carer
 - Other healthcare providers involved in your care such as specialists, allied health professionals, hospitals, community health services, pathology and diagnostic imaging
 - Medicare or the Department of Veteran's Affairs

(6) 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 Australian Privacy Principles and this policy
- With other healthcare providers
- When is it required or authorised by law (e.g. court subpoena)
- When it is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to a patient's life, health or safety, public health or safety or it is impracticable 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 processes
- 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 transfer of prescriptions and my health record system (e.g. sending a script, shared health summary or event summary)

Only people with the allocated level of permission will be able to access your information. 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 not consent, you may opt-out of direct marketing at any time by notifying our practice in writing. At registration you will be asked to participate in our reminder system. This is a service we supply in the interest of your health and you may choose to opt-out of this service at any time by way of a brief letter stating your wish to be removed from the reminder system.

(7) How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information and patient file are kept in computer format only.

Your personal information is stored on site in our medical software. It is also stored offsite on a secure data server in Sydney where it is stored encrypted. Upon retrieval (if needed) this information is in encryption format. This system is compliant with the Computer Information Security Standards set by our professional body (RACGP CISS) in line with the Privacy Act. These standards include virus protection, firewall software, individual passwords, regular backup that is tested daily, safe storage of electronic equipment, destruction of devices and supporting policies and procedures that are known to all team members. All team members with access to information including IT providers have signed confidentiality statements and are trained in protecting your information.

(8) 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 this request to be in writing directed to the Practice Manager at the practice address. You will receive a response to your request within 30 days.

There may be a fee attached for the administration of your records and the Doctor time required to comply with your request.

Our practice will take all reasonable steps to correct your personal information where the information is not accurate or up to date. We will ask you to verify 3 forms of identification each time you attend our practice. This is to uphold privacy policies and to confirm we have your current information.

(9) How can you lodge a privacy related concern? How will the concern be handled at our practice?

We take all patient concerns regarding privacy seriously. You should express any privacy concerns you may have in writing directed to Confidential - The Practice Manager at the practice address or drop it into the surgery. We will then attempt to resolve the concern within 10 days in accordance with our resolution procedure which involves discussion with relevant staff member/s. You may also contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC). For further information visit www.oaic.gov.au or call them on 1300 336 002.

(10) Raising a concern other than privacy related

As stated above, we take all concerns seriously. You should direct other concerns you may have, in writing directed to the Practice Manager - Confidential at the practice address or drop it into the surgery. Concerns will be handled as quickly as possible and all efforts are made to resolve concerns within 10 days.

(11) Policy review statement

This privacy policy is reviewed annually or when there are specific changes in our practice or externally, that may affect our patients. Whenever we amend this policy the new document will be available on our website and via reception