

Privacy Statement

To ensure patients who receive care from our Practice are comfortable in entrusting their health information to the Practice. This policy provides information to patients as to how their personal information (which includes their health information) is collected and used within the Practice, and the circumstances in which we may disclose it to third parties.

Practice Procedure

This Practice will:

- Provide a copy of this policy upon request
- Ensure staff comply with the policy and deal appropriately with enquiries or concerns
- Take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to implement practices, procedures and systems to ensure compliance with the current laws and deal with inquiries or complaints
- Collect personal information for the primary purpose of managing a patient's healthcare and for financial claims and payments.

Staff Responsibility

Our Practice's staff will take reasonable steps to ensure patients understand:

- What information has been and is being collected
- Why the information is being collected, whether this is due to a legal requirement
- How the information will be used or disclosed
- Why and when their consent is necessary
- Our Practice's procedures for access and correction of information, and responding to complaints of information breaches, including by providing this policy.
- Information is required from patients to be able to provide patients with a high level of patient care

Our staff will also take reasonable steps to ensure:

- Patients consent has been obtained to collect information
- Staff are fair in the way we collect information
- Patients understand they may request access to information we hold about them.
- If patients have any concerns with the way we handle patient information or regarding the accuracy of the information held by this practice, patients should discuss these with patients doctor.

This practice does not use Commonwealth Identifiers for any purpose other than the prescribed use. This means Medicare numbers can be stored but not used as the main identifier

Patient Consent

Our Practice will only interpret and apply a patient's consent for the primary purpose for which it was provided. The practice staff must seek additional consent from the patient if the personal information collected may be used for any other purpose.

Collection of Information

Our Practice will need to collect personal information as a provision of clinical services to a patient at the practice. Collected personal information will include a patient's:

- Name, address and contact details
- Date of birth
- Occupation
- Medicare number (where available)(for identification and claiming purposes)
- Healthcare identifiers
- Next of Kin and Emergency Contact details
- Medical information including medical history, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors

This information can come from:

- Individual
- Responsible person
- Other Health Service Providers, including Hospitals, Clinics, Pathology, X-Ray,
- Specialists, Other Medical Practices

- Internal records
- Insurers & Institutions
- Government instrumentalities, including D.V.A., MAIB, Workplace, Rehabilitation
- Officers (Workers Compensation) Prisons, Police Courts

All information is collected to enable the Medical Practice to provide the best possible patient care by:

- Linking all reports to individuals to ensure appropriate treatment
- Make diagnosis and interpret results
- Seeking confirmation from third parties where appropriate
- Having relevant information available for future reference in determining trends & significant changes
- Fulfilling regulatory & Public Health requirements
- Assuring quality and improve processes.

Storage Of Information

Storage, maintenance and security of patient's files are of the highest priority to this practice. Every effort is made to keep and individuals information accurate, up to date and complete. Physical areas and systems containing private information have restricted access and any changes are tracked.

A patient's personal information will be held at our Practice in:

- Electronic records
- Paper based files

Accreditation of this practice requires physical and electronic security of information.

Our Practice's procedure for collecting personal information is set out below.

1. Practice staff collect patient's personal and demographic information via registration when patients present to the Practice for the first time and fill out the new patient information form.
2. During the course of providing medical services, the Practice's healthcare practitioners will consequently collect further personal information.
3. Personal information may also be collected from the patient's guardian or responsible person (where practicable and necessary), or from any other involved healthcare specialists.

Use and disclosure of information

This Practice will do its best to ensure that patients records:

- Are accurate, comprehensive, well-organised and legible
- Are up to date
- Have enough information to allow another doctor to care for patients
- Do not contain offensive or irrelevant comments about patients
- Contain a summary of each patient's care
- Can be used to remind patients, with patients permission, to return for follow-up, check ups and reviews

Personal information will only be used for the purpose of providing medical services and for claims and payments, unless otherwise consented to. Some disclosure may occur to third parties engaged by or for the Practice for business purposes, such as accreditation or for the provision of information technology. These third parties are required to comply with this policy.

The Practice will inform the patient where there is a statutory requirement to disclose certain personal information (for example, some diseases require mandatory notification).

Our Practice will not disclose personal information to any third party other than in the course of providing medical services, without full disclosure to the patient or the recipient, the reason for the information transfer and full consent from the patient. The Practice will not disclose personal information to anyone outside Australia without need and without patient consent.

Exceptions to disclose without patient consent are where the information is:

- Required by law

- 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 a confidential dispute resolution process

Our Practice will not use any personal information in relation to direct marketing to a patient without that patient's consent. Patients may opt out of direct marketing at any time by notifying the Practice in a letter or email.

Our Practice evaluates all unsolicited information it receives to decide if it should be kept, acted on or destroyed.

Our Practice will take responsible steps to correct personal information where it is satisfied they are not accurate or up to date. From time to time, the Practice will ask patients to verify the personal information held by the Practice is correct and up to date. Patients may also request the Practice corrects or updates their information, and patients should make such requests in person.

Access to patients health information

Patients are entitled to see their records and change them to improve the accuracy of the information. This would usually take the form of an addition to the records not a deletion of the portion of the record to be corrected.

A written request positive identification of the patient is required and depending on how old the information is, a charge may apply.

Information collected or generated before 21st December 2001 may not be available.

Individual patient records are retained until the patient has reached 25 years of age or for a minimum of 7 years from the time of last contact, whichever is the longer.

Our Practice takes complaints and concerns about the privacy of patients personal information seriously. Patients should express any privacy concerns in writing addressed to:

The Practice Manager
Amiens Clinic
254 Main Road
DERWENT PARK 7009

The Practice will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with its complaint resolution procedure.

Or The National Privacy Commissioner is able to receive complaints concerning privacy issues. Complaints here will have a response within 28days.

National Privacy Commissioner
Privacy hotline 1300 363 992
GPO Box 5218
Sydney NSW 2001
Website: www.privacy.gov.au/complaints

Related resources

Compliance indicators for the Australian Privacy Principles: An addendum to the computer and information security standards (Second Edition).

www.racgp.org.au/ehealth/privacy

RACGP Computer and information security standards (CISS) and templates (2013)

www.racgp.org.au/patientsr-practice/ehealth/cis/ciss/

The RACGP Privacy handbook and patient pamphlet

www.racgp.org.au/ehealth/privacy