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Privacy Policy

The Australian Privacy Principles (APP) provide a privacy protection framework that supports the rights and obligations of collecting, holding, using, accessing and correcting personal information. The APP consists of 13 principle-based laws that apply equally to paper-based and digital records.

This policy is aimed to guide tenant doctors and staff in meeting APP obligations, and also details to patients how the Medical Centre uses their personal information. This policy must be made available to patients upon request.

**Medical Centre Procedure**

The Medical Centre will:

* Provide a copy of this policy upon request
* Ensure tenant doctors and staff comply with the APP and deal appropriately with inquiries and concerns
* Take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to implement practices, procedures and systems to ensure compliance with the APP 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**

The Medical Centre’s tenant doctors and staff will take reasonable steps to ensure patients understand:

* What information has been and is being collected
* Why the information is being collected, and whether this is due to a legal requirement
* How the information will be used or disclosed
* Why and when their consent is necessary
* The Medical Centre’s procedures for access and correction of information, and responding to complaints of information breaches, including by providing this policy

**Patient Consent**

The Medical Centre will only interpret and apply a patient’s consent for the primary purpose for which it was provided. The Medical Centre tenant doctors and staff must seek additional consent from the patient if the personal information collected may be used for any other purpose.

**Collection of Information**

The Medical Centre will need to collect personal information as a provision of clinical services to a patient at the practice. Collected personal information will include patients’:

* Names, addresses and contact details
* Medicare number (where available) (for identification and claiming purposes)
* Healthcare identifiers (MyHealth)
* Medical information including medical history, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors

A patient’s personal information may be held at the Clinic in various forms:

* As paper records
* As electronic records
* As visual – x-rays, CT scans, videos and photos
* As audio recordings

The Medical Centre’s procedure for collecting personal information is set out as follows:

1. Medical Centre staff collect patients’ personal and demographic information via registration when patients present to the Medical Centre for the first time. Patients are encouraged to pay attention to the collection statement contained with the form and information about the management of collected information and patient privacy.
2. During the course of providing medical services, the Medical Centre’s tenant doctors will consequently collect further personal information.
3. Personal information may also be collected from the patient’s guardian or responsible person (where practical and necessary), or form any other involved healthcare specialists.

The Medical Centre holds all personal information securely, whether in electronic format, in protected information systems, or in hard copy format in a secured environment.

**Use and Disclosure of Information**

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 Medical Centre for business purposes, such as accreditation or for the provision of information technology, These third parties are required to comply with this policy, The Medical Centre will inform the patient where there is a statutory requirement to disclose certain personal information (for example, some diseases require mandatory notification).

The Medical Centre 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 Medical Centre 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

The Medical Centre will not use any personal information in relation to direct marketing to a patient without that patient’s express consent. Patients may opt out of direct marketing at any time by notifying the Medical Centre in a letter or email.

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

**Access, Corrections and Privacy Concerns**

The Medical Centre acknowledged patients may request access to their medical records. Patients are encouraged to make this request in writing, and the Medical Centre will respond within a reasonable time.

The Medical Centre will take reasonable steps to correct personal information where it is satisfied they are not accurate or up to date. From time to time, the Medical Centre will ask patients to verify that the personal information held by the Medical Centre is correct and up to date. Patients may also request that the Medical Centre corrects or updates their information, and patients should make such request in writing.

The Medical Centre takes complaints and concerns about the privacy of patients’ personal information seriously. Patients should express any privacy concerns in writing to the Practice Manager. The Medical Centre will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with its complaint resolution procedure.

If you are not satisfied with the way your complaint relating to privacy has been dealt with by this Medical Centre, then you should contact he Queensland Government or lodge an online complaint at [www.qld.gov.au/health/contacts/complaints](http://www.qld.gov.au/health/contacts/complaints)