

Wendouree Medical Centre - Privacy Policy

Current as of: 22 June 2022

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.

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?

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 and payments, practice audits and accreditation, and business processes (e.g. staff training).

What personal information do we collect?

The information we will collect about you includes:

- names, date of birth, addresses, contact details;
- medical information including medical history, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors;
- Medicare and concession card numbers (where available) for identification and claiming purposes;
- healthcare identifiers;
- health fund details.

Dealing with us anonymously

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.

The Privacy Act requires us to provide our patients with the option of not identifying themselves, or of using a pseudonym, when dealing with you (Australian Privacy Principle 2) unless it is impracticable for us to do so.

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 registration;
2. During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information;
3. We may also collect your personal information when you personally visit our medical centre or telephone us;
4. 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 responsible person;
 - other involved healthcare providers, such as specialists, allied health professionals, hospitals, community health services and pathology and diagnostic imaging services
 - your health fund, Medicare, or the Department of Veteran's Affairs (as necessary).

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 APPs and this policy;
- with other healthcare providers;
- 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).

Only people that 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.

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 consent, you may opt-out of direct marketing at any time by notifying our practice in writing.

How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information is stored at our practice via electronic and paper records. Our practice stores all personal information securely. Paper records are stored in a locked cupboard to ensure maximum privacy.

We securely store and protect your personal information in an electronic format, in a protected information system. Specific examples such as: use of individual passwords, screensavers requiring input of individual passwords after inactivity, firewalls, backing up patient information to the server, confidentiality agreements for staff and contractors.

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.

Our practice acknowledges patients may request access to their medical records. As your records belong to the Doctor we require you to put this request in writing.

If you are moving to another Medical Practice and require your records to be transferred to the new Practice a request for transfer of medical records request form from the Medical Practice will be required and our practice will respond within a reasonable time, usually 14 days.

Our 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 your personal information held by our practice is correct and up-to-date. You may also request that we correct or update your information, and you should make such requests verbally after identity has suitably been confirmed or in writing to the Practice Manager, 450 - 452 Gillies Street North, Wendouree, Victoria 3355.

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. We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with our resolution procedure. Complaints can be lodged:

- In person to the Practice Manager Victoria Brunelle
- via our email: admin@wendoureemedicalcentre.com.au, or
- Sent to 450 - 452 Gillies Street North, Wendouree Victoria 3335 attention to the Practice Manager Victoria Brunelle
- By contacting the Practice Manager Victoria Brunelle on 5339 9298 8:30am-5:00pm Monday - Friday.

Complaints received will result in some/all of the following depending on type/severity of complaint:

- Complaint documented in complaint spreadsheet,
- Person will be informed in writing on receipt of complaint.
- Meeting by the Management Team: Practice Manager – Victoria Brunelle and Principal General Practitioner (GP) Dr. Neville Ravindranayagam,
- Staff interviewed
 - Position reviewed
 - Training provided
 - Process reviewed and amended if deemed necessary

The turnaround time frame for complaints will be within 30 days, and the complaint will be notified in writing the outcome of their complaint

Depending on the nature of the complaint the **Office of the Health Service Commissioner** may need to be contacted, and to give them time to respond and investigate may delay the patients being notified of the outcome of the complaint. For further information for the Office of the Health Services Commissioner:

Call: 1300 582 113

Fax: (03) 9032 3111

E-mail: hsc@dhhs.vic.gov.au

Website: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc/index.htm>

Write to or visit: Health Services Commissioner
Level 26, 570 Bourke Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Policy review statement

The privacy policy will be reviewed every 12 months or after legislation and accreditation standards have been amended. Patient will be informed by posters in/around the medical centre and the amended privacy policy brochure will be available in the waiting room to said patients.