



Northend Medical Centre – Privacy Policy

Current as of: 01/11/2018

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 team to access and use your personal information so that they may 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.

Our patient registration form includes a brief summary of our privacy policy, and includes a section for you to sign and provide consent.

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 your:

- 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 number (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.

How do we collect your personal information?

Our practice may collect your personal information in several different ways.

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. Our practice is involved in eHealth initiatives such as the My Health Record eHealth service.
3. 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 social media.
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 / diagnostic imaging services
 - Your health fund, Medicare, or the Department of Veterans' Affairs (as necessary).



When, why and with whom do we share your personal information?

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 – information sent to these third parties is de-identified, and 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)
- During the course of providing medical services, through eTP, My Health Record (e.g. via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary).

Only people who need access to 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 may be stored at our practice in various forms.

Our practice stores all personal information securely.

Our practice is in the process of phasing out our old paper records, and moving to a fully electronic patient file system. All results are directly linked to your patient file on the file system which is securely encrypted.

How can you access and correct your personal information at our practice?

You have the right to request access to, and the correction of, your personal information.

Our practice acknowledges patients may request access to their medical records. We require you to put this request in writing and our practice will respond within a reasonable time. If you would like your records transferred to another medical practice, we require signed authority on the practice letterhead.

If you would like a copy of your file from our practice (or a health summary), we require you to sign a form on our letterhead.

We endeavour to attend to all requests within 30 days, however there may be a delay in the case of an influx of requests. Please ask for an estimated time frame when lodging your request.

Our practice will take reasonable steps to correct your personal information here the information is not accurate, or up to date. At each visit, we will ask that you verify your personal information held by our practice is correct and current. You may also request we provide a copy of our *Update of Personal Information* form to fill out with any new information or corrections.



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 that you may have in writing. We will then attempt to resolve these in accordance with our resolution procedure.

Our contact details are as follows:

Northend Medical Centre
48 – 50 Childs Road EPPING 3076
Ph. 9408 8800 | Fax. 9408 8822
reception@northendmedicalcentre.com.au

We endeavour to resolve all complaints or concerns within 30 days, however the timeframe may differ on a case by case basis.

You may also contact the OAIC. Generally, the OAIC will require you to give them time to respond before they will investigate. For further information, visit www.oaic.gov.au or call the OAIC on 1300 363 992.

If you remain dissatisfied, you may also approach:

The office of the Health Services Commissioner
30th Floor, 570 Bourke Street MELBOURNE 3000
Ph. 8601 5200

Privacy and our website

We collect personal information on our website through the use of a contact form. Analytics may also be collected, to analyse patient flow through our website.

Policy review statement

Our Practice Privacy Policy is review regularly to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur. If our privacy policy is amended, a notice will be displayed in the practice, and a notice may be posted on our website.