



## Patient Information

# OUR PRIVACY POLICY

The provision of quality healthcare requires a relationship of trust and confidentiality between all parties. Consistent with our commitment to quality care, HealthCare has a policy to protect patient and client privacy.

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people first, people always

## Our Obligations

As Australia's largest privately owned private healthcare group, Health Care Australia is committed to safeguarding the privacy of patient information.

Our doctors, nurses and other staff are bound by law and by a strict code of conduct to maintain confidentiality of patient information.

We comply with the Commonwealth Privacy Act and amendments, such as the *Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012*, incorporating the Australian Privacy Principles.

This brochure provides details of what personal information we will hold about you as a patient at one of our hospitals, how you can access this information and the purposes for which your personal information is used and disclosed. Your personal information includes your personal details and personal health information relating to your treatment.

## Information We Collect

We collect your personal details and medical history so we can provide you with treatment and advice. Test results and further information collected while you're being treated in hospital are kept with your medical record.

We only collect information that is relevant and necessary for your treatment and to manage our service.

While the hospital maintains its own paper-based medical record, some of the information stored electronically is linked on an organisation basis.

We take all reasonable steps to ensure information we collect about you is accurate, complete and up-to-date. Patients can request incorrect information be amended.

We take reasonable steps to ensure information we collect about you is stored securely. We are required by law to retain medical records for certain periods of time depending on the type of record and facility.

## Information We Collect may include:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Address
- Contact numbers
- Financial details (e.g. health fund details, person responsible for the account)
- Health history
- Family history
- Information that we consider necessary to assist our staff in your diagnosis and treatment

## Why this Information is Collected

If you are to receive or have received a service from any Health Care facility, we will collect and hold your personal information to:

- Provide the required treatment, service and advice
- Administer and manage those services, including charging, billing and debt collection
- Contact you to provide advice or information relating to your treatment
- Conduct appropriate health insurance eligibility checks
- Improve the quality of our services through research and development
- Conduct regular surveys to gain an understanding of individual needs
- Maintain and develop business systems and infrastructure to improve the services we provide

## How this Information is Collected

All Health Care staff will endeavour to collect your personal information directly from you.

This may take place when you complete admission or administrative paperwork. It may also occur via the hospital admission process, through the doctor's rooms or over the telephone.

In certain circumstances or in an emergency, we will collect personal information from third parties who can help us provide you with safe quality care. Third parties may include:

- Employer
- Health service provider/professional
- Family members, friends or carers
- Power of Attorney

## Consequences of Not Providing Personal Information

If you do not wish for us to collect certain information, you will need to tell us so we can discuss any consequences this may have for your healthcare.

## Use and Disclosure of Personal Information

We will use and disclose your information for purposes directly related to your treatment and in ways you would reasonably expect for your ongoing care. This may include, but is not limited to the transfer of relevant information to your nominated GP to another treating health service or hospital, to a specialist for a referral, for pathology tests and xrays.

The main purpose of collecting information about you is to provide ongoing medical treatment and advice.

We are required to disclose some information to State and Commonwealth Government agencies to comply with laws regarding the reporting of notifiable diseases and statistics. Your personal information may be required as evidence in court when subpoenaed.

We are permitted to use patient information for indirect purposes to operate our facility. For example, we may disclose patient information to a debt collector or credit checking agency, to your health insurance fund, to the Department of Veterans' Affairs, to our insurers, to an external company subcontracted to evaluate patient satisfaction, or for clinical audit and quality assurance activities.

If there has been a break in the continuity of patient care, we might need to seek your consent before releasing information to a new doctor or health professional. If the situation is an emergency, consent isn't required.

We can not use your information for direct marketing purposes unless you provide authorisation.

Our staff may convey to your next of kin or a close family member, general information about your condition while in hospital, in accordance with the accepted customs of medical practice, unless you request otherwise.

Our policies and procedures ensure our staff treat your information confidentially and discreetly.

## Storing Personal Information

We store personal information in a variety of ways, including paper and electronic formats.

The security of information is important to Health Care. Our staff are responsible for maintaining the security of patient information from unauthorised access, to misuse, loss and damage.

## Access to Your Information

You are entitled to request access to all personal information including your medical record held by the service. Normally you will be asked to apply for access in writing and provide identification. You may be charged a fee for copies of your personal information or medical records.

Access to personal information may be declined in special circumstances, such as where giving access would put you or another person at risk of harm, or if it would unreasonably impact on someone else's privacy.

If you believe the information we hold about you is incorrect and an error has been made, please let us know and we will correct the information. If we believe the information is correct, you may request that your view be noted on the record,

Requests for access to or correction of your medical record should be addressed to your health service provider's Medical Record Department.



### Contacting Us

If you have questions about the privacy of your information or if you have a complaint, contact the Hospital's Director of Nursing. Alternatively, you can contact the Australian Privacy Commissioner.

### Further Information

If you would like more information about privacy in general, please refer to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner's website at [www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au)

### About Healthe Care

Healthe Care is one of the largest network of privately owned private hospitals in Australia. All Healthe Care hospitals are fully accredited by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards and we are bound by and uphold the Australian Privacy Principles and State Privacy Laws.

For further information about Healthe Care visit [healthecare.com.au](http://healthecare.com.au) or call **02 9215 8200**.