

Boroondara Health & Wellness Centre

Privacy Policy

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 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.

Management at our practice believes that it is impractical to appropriately care for people who do not identify themselves clearly. As such, to provide any medical services we require patients to provide accurate information including name, DOB, and preferably Medicare details so a rebate can be processed. The exception is in an emergency, where we are happy to provide medical care as required.

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 either paper format or SMS document link.
2. During providing medical services, we may collect further personal information. E.g. your My Health Record (with your consent), Health Summaries from after-hours doctors, emergency departments or specialist letters
3. We may also collect your personal information when you visit our website, send us an email or SMS, telephone us or make an online appointment.

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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 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 – these third parties are required to comply with APPs and this policy.
- with other healthcare providers. The practice uses a medical computer software program which enables the doctor to only include relevant health information in a referral. All referrals are sent via an encrypted /password protected email, faxed or handed to the patient during the consultation.
- 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 providing medical services, though, MyHealth Record (e.g. via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary- with your consent).

Only people who need to access your information will be able to do so. Other than while 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.

Our practice may use your personal information to improve the quality of the services we offer to our patients through research and analysis of our patient data.

We may provide de-identified data to other organisations to improve population health outcomes. The information is secure, patients cannot be identified, and the information is stored within Australia. You can let our reception staff know if you do not want your information included.

How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information may be stored at our practice in various forms.

- Electronic records
- X-rays / scans

Our practice stores all personal information securely.

- Electronic records
- Password protected access to all computers

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- Confidentiality agreements with all staff members, clinical and non-clinical
- No medical information is emailed to any patient or organization without written permission of the patient.
- Transport of all medical information is via registered post or courier service.

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. We require you to put this request in writing and hand deliver or post/fax to us and our practice will respond within a reasonable time. Approx. 30 days. There may be a fee associated with this request depending on the time required by a staff member to supervise this request.

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 that your personal information held by our practice is correct and current. You may also request that we correct or update your information, and you should make such requests in writing to the practice manager, e.g. fax or post.

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.

Fax, email or post your concerns to the practice manager

Fax: +61 3 9819 4244

Email: admin@healthandwellness.net.au

Post: Boroondara Health & Wellness Centre

738 Glenferrie Road

Hawthorn VIC 3122

If the issue is easily rectified, we will contact you within 5 business days. If more complex and management/staff need to be notified and discussions on resolutions considered it may take 30 days to respond either via phone call or post.

If the matter cannot be resolved, the patient is advised about how to contact the external health complaints agency for our state.

Victoria

Office of the Health Services Commissioner

Telephone: 1300 582 113

Web: www.health.vic.gov.au

You may also contact the OAIC.

Complaints that relate to privacy issues or concerns that cannot be resolved internally are to be directed to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC).

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

Telephone: 1300 363 992

Postal Address: GPO Box 5218, Sydney NSW 2001

Web: www.oaic.gov.au

Members of the public may make a notification to the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) -www.ahpra.gov.au - about the conduct, health or performance of a practitioner or the health of a student. Practitioners, employers and education providers are all mandated by law to report notifiable conduct relating to a registered practitioner or student to AHPRA.

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Privacy and our website

We do not use our website or social media for the collection of any data relating to our patients.

Policy review statement

This privacy policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur.

Patients will be notified by posters in the waiting room, information in our practice newsletter and a statement on our website.

Disclaimer

The *Privacy policy template for general practices* is intended for use as a guide of a general nature only and may or may not be relevant to particular practices or circumstances. The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) has used its best endeavours to ensure the template is adapted for general practice to address current and anticipated future privacy requirements. Persons adopting or implementing its procedures or recommendations should exercise their own independent skill or judgement or seek appropriate professional advice. While the template is directed to general practice, it does not ensure compliance with any privacy laws, and cannot of itself guarantee discharge of the duty of care owed to patients. Accordingly, the RACGP disclaims all liability (including negligence) to any users of the information contained in this template for any loss or damage (consequential or otherwise), cost or expense incurred or arising by reason of reliance on the template in any manner.