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## **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.

This practice follows the guidelines of the RACGP's Handbook for the Management of Health Information in General Practice. The handbook incorporates federal and state privacy legislation and the Australian Privacy Principles (APP's).

### **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, occupation/employer
- ethnicity
- concession card 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
- 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 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. This may be via Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (eTP), My Health Record/PCEHR and EReferrals.
- 3) We may also collect your personal information when you visit our website or social media page, send us an email, telephone us or make an online appointment.
- 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, pathology and diagnostic 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 APP's 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 and 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 Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (eTP), My Health Record/PCEHR (e.g. via Shared Health Summary) and EReferrals.

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 may be stored at our practice in various forms. Our practice stores all patient information electronically within our computer system. Any patient information received via hard copy is scanned into your personal health information and then destroyed in a secure manner.

Our practice stores all personal information securely within our computer system. Doctor's and staff must access the computer system with their own personal login and password. Screen savers are set on all computers. All staff are required to sign a confidentiality agreement on commencement of employment and are aware of the implications if this is not adhered to.

### **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 by completing a "*Request for Personal Health Information*" form available from Reception. This request is given to your doctor for approval. Our practice will endeavour to respond to your request within five (5) working days. Depending on what is involved you may be asked to contribute to the cost of providing the information.

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 in writing to [info@cityheartmedical.com.au](mailto:info@cityheartmedical.com.au).

### **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. Please send your concerns to the Practice Manager, 105 East Street, Rockhampton or alternatively hand in personally at the Practice, please allow two (2) working days for an initial response to your concern.

If you are not satisfied with the response we have provided 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](http://www.oaic.gov.au) or call the OAIC on 1300 336 002.

### **Privacy and our website (including social media pages)**

When you choose to contact us via our website or social media please be aware that the digital information we receive may be collected and used for the following reasons:

- to contact you as per the details you have provided
- to update your personal health information at your request
- to follow up on any feedback or complaints that you have submitted via our website or social media pages
- to respond to a general enquiry that you have submitted via our website or social media page

Please be aware that as with any website or social media page, the personal details you submit may be used in website analytics, cookies, etc.

### **Policy review statement**

This privacy policy will be reviewed annually or in accordance with any changes to legislations. A copy of this policy is available on our website and on request at Reception.

*Last reviewed: August 2016*