



Murrumbidgee Medical and Primary Care Privacy Policy

Reviewed February 2024. Next review February 2025

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 (eg 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.

Information can also be collected through electronic transfer of prescriptions (eTP), My Health Record, eg via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary.

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.
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
- when it is required or authorised by law (eg 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 (eg some diseases require mandatory notification)
- during the course of providing medical services, through eTP, My Health Record (eg via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary).

Only people who 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.

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. It is primarily stored in electronic systems maintained and protected in accordance with national standards.

Our practice stores all personal information securely and have appropriate measures in place to prevent information loss.

Access is controlled by user authentication and is provided in a way that is appropriate to the role of the team member.

At times information may be stored temporarily in paper format. This might be from incoming correspondence from other medical providers for example or from completing a handwritten form. Paper based information is scanned into our electronic systems and the paper securely disposed of or sometimes provided to you to take to another service or provider.

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 our Request For Medical Records form available at the practice and our practice will respond within 30 days.

If a paper copy of your record is released, we may charge a fee up to a maximum of \$45 depending on the size of the record.

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 to be left at reception or mailed to

The Practice Manager
Murrumbidgee Medical and Primary Care Centre
81 Kurrajong Avenue Leeton
NSW 2705

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.

You can submit your concerns in writing to the Practice Manager to be left at reception or mailed to

The Practice Manager
Murrumbidgee Medical and Primary Care Centre
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We will conduct an investigation based on the information you provide along with information from our own investigation. We will notify you the outcome of our investigation and if applicable changes to our processes or policies resulting in the investigation. We may contact you through this process to request further information. You will be notified of the outcome of the investigation and resolution process within 30 days of the receipt of your complaint.

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

You may also chose to submit a complaint to the NSW Health Care Complaints commission www.hccc.nsw.gov.au 1800 043 159

Privacy and our website

Murrumbidgee Medical and Primary Care Centre takes the privacy of visitors to our website very seriously. At times our site may contain forms that request information from you. Information collected by us is for use only for its explicitly stated purpose. We will not share any contact information or other personal information with any other business or individual.

Our website uses Google Analytics. We use reports from Google Analytics for quality improvement on our website. It lets us know things like the search terms used to find our site, general geographic area of our visitors, and which are the most visited pages on our site. If you have cookies enabled in your web browser, Google Analytics will place a cookie (a small text file) on your computer to track your use of the site. This will not identify you to us, but will help us track how many visits to our site are new or repeat visitors.

Google may transfer information to third parties where they are required to by law or to third parties who process report data on Google's behalf.

You are able to refuse the use of cookies by selecting the appropriate settings in your browser. If you do this, some parts of our website may not function normally. By using our website, you consent to the use of your data for the purposes outlined above.

Policy review statement

This policy is reviewed annually or as necessitated by changes to laws and regulations. When this policy is altered, the new version will be published to our website and made available in printed form at reception.

This policy was developed with the assistance of the Royal College of Australian General Practitioners Privacy Policy template and has been modified to suit our practice.