

# Anderson Road Medical Centre Privacy Policy

Current as of: 08.09.2022

Person Responsible: Practice Manager/Privacy Officer, Chriss Mirtsios

## 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, understanding the needs of our patients).

## 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.

The Privacy Act 1988 sets out two compulsory mechanisms for informing patients about how their health information will be used.

1. A practice privacy policy. Organisations are required to provide this policy on request and commonly satisfy this requirement by making their privacy policy available on their website or on a sign at reception.
2. A 'collection statement' which contains prescribed information, including the following:
  - the identity of the practice and how to contact it
  - the fact information is collected and the circumstances of that collection
  - the fact that patients can access their own health information
  - the purpose for which the information is collected

- other organisations to which the practice usually discloses patient health information
- any law that requires the particular information to be collected
- the main consequence for the individual if important health information is not provided
- the existence of a supporting privacy policy.

The practice has a 'Health Information Collection, Use and Disclosure' statement attached to the patient registration form.

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, Health share referrals, Shared Health Summary, Event Summary, HPOS.

We may also collect your personal information when you send us an email or SMS, telephone us, make an online appointment or communicate with us using social media.

3. 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 (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 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 securely stores and protect personal information in an electronic format, in protected information systems in a

secured environment. Examples such as the use of passwords, secure cabinets, rooms and building, confidentiality agreements for staff and contractors.

## 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 our practice will respond within a reasonable time of 30 days. If you request to transfer your medical records to another practice, there is an administrative charge of \$40 for a copy of a patient's entire history, plus \$10 for registered post. Patients cannot be charged for making the request – only for the costs of complying with the request. The clinic automatically sends a copy of your Health Summary to your new clinic free of charge.

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 and bring it into reception during office hours.

## 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. The complainant will be informed to address any concerns to the Privacy Officer/ Practice Manager, Chriss Mirtsios. It can be sent to 162 Anderson Road Fawkner or call 9359 3288. We would try to respond to any complaint within 30 days of receiving it in writing. If they wish to take the complaint further, they would be given the Victorian Health Commissioners number to contact T: 1300 582 113.

You may also contact the Office of the Health Services Commissioner (OAIC), Complaints and Information. For further information visit [www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au) or call the OAIC on 1300 363 992.

## Privacy and our website

Practitioners at the practice do not communicate via email. Please call reception if you wish to communicate with any staff member.

### ***Disclaimer of Electronic Communication; Acceptance of Risk.***

Electronic communications and any attachments may contain confidential information. If you are not the intended recipient, please do not copy, retain, disclose or use any part of this information. If you receive this email in error, please notify the sender immediately and destroy or delete any copies.

Electronic communication is subject to risk. Electronic communications are not secure and cannot be guaranteed to be secure or error free as they can be intercepted or read by someone other than the intended recipient, delayed, mis-directed, altered, corrupted or destroyed. Anderson Road Medical Centre takes reasonable measures to ensure that outgoing electronic communication is free of virus infection, such infection remains a possibility. Neither the sender nor Anderson Road Medical Centre accepts any liability for any errors or omissions in the content of any electronic communication, or any damage caused by their transmission.

If you are a patient please do not use email as a method of communicating any health concerns, unless instructed. Please phone the clinic.

Any person or entity engaging in electronic communication with Anderson Road Medical Centre accepts all the foregoing risks and these Terms and Conditions by virtue of engaging in such communication.

## Policy review statement

This privacy policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur. Updates will be posted on the notice board in the waiting room and website for patients to read.