

Accreditation Link C6.3A 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 your doctor 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?

Your doctor and Hazelbrook General Practice (HGP) 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. Your doctor and HGP also use it for directly related business activities, such as financial claims and payments.

What personal information do we collect?

The information we will collect about you includes:

- 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
- Insurance – Workcover information

Dealing with us anonymously

You have the right to deal with your doctor and HGP 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?

Your doctor and HGP 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 provision of medical services, we may collect further personal information. Information can also be collected through Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (eTP), MyHealth Record, e.g. via Shared Health Summary and an Event Summary subject to your consent after speaking with your doctor. Patient consultations are not recorded.
3. Your doctor and HGP may also collect your personal information when you visit our website, send us an email or SMS, telephone us, make an online appointment or communicate with us.
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, general practitioners, allied health professionals, hospitals, community health services and pathology and diagnostic imaging services
 - Medicare, Insurance companies (for Workcover claims), or the Department of Veterans' Affairs (as necessary).

Who do we share your personal information with?

Your doctor and HGP sometimes share your personal information:

- with third parties who work with our practice for business purposes, such as 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 provision of medical services. Only people who need to access your information will be able to do so. Other than providing medical services or as otherwise described in this policy, our practice will not share personal information with any third party without your consent.

Your personal information will not be shared with anyone outside Australia (unless under exceptional circumstances that are permitted by law) without your consent.

Your doctor and HGP 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.

Your doctor and HGP 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.

Please note your doctor does not use AI tools or record remote or telehealth consultations.

Referral letters

Referral letters are critical in integrating the care of patients with external healthcare providers. Using standardised Best Practice referral templates helps ensure that all necessary information is captured for referrals. These templates provide a consistent format for information sharing, which leads to clearer communication between referring and receiving providers.

Doctors review patient referrals to ensure no sensitive patient health information that is not relevant to the receiving provider is included in the referral.

Doctors may also offer patients the opportunity to read a referral letter before it is sent.

How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information may be stored at our practice in various forms including paper and electronically.

Your doctor and HGP stores all personal information securely.

In accordance with the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002*, we keep health information for a minimum of 7 years from the date of last entry in the patient record (unless the patient was a child in which case the record must be kept until the patient attains or would have attained 25 years of age).

Destruction of Medical Records

Once the time for keeping medical records has expired, medical records may be destroyed in a manner that preserves the confidentiality of the information contained therein as per Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002.

How can you access and correct your personal information?

You have the right to request access to, and correction of, your personal information.

Your doctor and HGP acknowledge patients may request access to their medical records. Your Doctor and HGP will require you to put this request in writing and HGP will respond within a reasonable time. You may be charged for this service.

Your doctor and HGP will take reasonable steps to correct your personal information where the information is not accurate or up to date. From time to time and 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 at 7-9 Rosedale Avenue, Hazelbrook, NSW 2779 or via email mail@hazelbrookgp.com.au

How can you lodge a privacy-related complaint, and how will the complaint be handled at our practice?

Your doctor and HGP take the privacy of your information seriously and it is important that you understand how your doctor will manage your personal information. If you have any questions or comments in relation to this Privacy Policy, if you wish to access or correct your personal information, or if you wish to make a complaint about a privacy matter, please contact us by email at mail@hazelbrookgp.com.au , or by mail addressed to:

The Practice Manager, 7-9 Rosedale Avenue, Hazelbrook, NSW 2779 and it will be dealt with within 30 days of lodgment by your doctor. You may also contact the OAIC. Generally, the OAIC will require you to give them time to respond before they investigate. For further information visit www.oaic.gov.au or call the OAIC on 1300 363 992

Privacy and our website

The Hazelbrook General Practice (HGP) website provides links to websites outside of facility services. These linked sites are not under our control, and your doctor and HGP are not responsible for the conduct of companies linked to our website. Before disclosing your personal information on any other website, it is advised you to examine the privacy policy and terms and conditions of that website.

Policy review statement

Your doctor and HGP reserve the right to change its privacy policy at any time. Your doctor and HGP will notify any changes by posting an updated version of the policy on its website. This policy is reviewed annually.