

Privacy Policy - Current as of: August 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 that 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 or DVA 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 authorized by law to only deal with identified individuals. However, if you choose to do so, we are unable to bulk bill or provide you with a Medicare rebate if you are a private patient, as we require your personal information to submit a claim to Medicare for payment.

This follows on with requests for pathology or imaging under a pseudonym or anonymously. These providers would also need to charge you, with no Medicare rebate, as they too require your personal details to submit a claim to Medicare for payment.

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, demographic and family and social history information via your registration paperwork.
2. During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information; via

electronic prescriptions, My Health Record via Shared Health Summaries and Event Summaries.

3. We 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 using social media.
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, eg we may forward a health summary to the hospital should you attend there and they require further information regarding your medical history.
- 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 electronic prescriptions, 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.

How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information may be stored at our practice in various forms; paper records, electronics records; visual records (x-rays, CT scans), videos, photos.

Our practice stores all personal information securely. All staff and Drs are required to sign confidentiality agreements. All electronic information is password protected and in a hard copy format that is backed up daily and stored securely.

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 – within a month. There would be a charge to comply with this request, as it involves supervision and hence staffing costs.

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.

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.

Flynns Beach Medical Centre

Phone: 02 6583 8844

54 Pacific Drive

Fax: 02 6583 1010

PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444

We will endeavor to get back to you within 30 days.

If you are not satisfied with the result, 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.

Notifiable Data Breaches

A data breach will be a notifiable breach where there is unauthorised access, to, or unauthorised disclosure, or loss of, personal information, held at Flynns Beach Medical Centre or Lachlan medical Centre and a reasonable person would conclude that there is a likely risk of serious harm to any of the affected individual as a result of the breach.

Serious harm could include physical, psychological, emotional, economic and financial harm and serious harm to reputation

If remedial action cannot be taken to prevent the likelihood of serious harm, this breach must be reported. Under the new scheme, individuals affected by a 'notifiable data breach' must be made aware of the breach so they can take action to protect themselves from harm. The legislation covers the private healthcare sector. The breach must also be reported to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC).

The new legislation does not require every data breach to be notified. Breaches that are quickly rectified, so that the affected individuals are not at risk of serious harm, will not require notification.

Policy review statement

This privacy policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur. We will notify patients when any amendments are made to the policy, by noting it in the Practice Information sheet.)