



Ashby Street Medical Centre Privacy Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that patients who receive care from the practice are comfortable in entrusting their health information to the Practice. This policy provides information to patients as to how their personal information (which includes their health information) is collected and used within the practice, and the circumstances in which we may disclose it to third parties.

Ashby Street Medical Centre takes its obligations under the Victorian Health Records Act 2002 and the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 seriously and incorporates the Australian Privacy Principles (APP).

The APP provide privacy protection framework that supports the rights and obligations of collecting, holding, using, assessing and correcting personal information.

Ashby Street Medical Centre collects and holds personal information about you.

The main reason that we collect this information from you is so that we may properly assess, diagnose, treat your illness properly and be proactive in your health care needs. The information we ask you is very personal. But not having it may restrict our capacity to provide you with the standard of medical care that you expect.

The primary purpose of a clinical health record is to hold the information about a patient that is required for effective care: good patient information supports appropriate clinical decisions.

What do we collect?

Names, addresses and contact details including your next of kin and an emergency contact person.

We also collect your healthcare identifiers, Medicare number along with any details of concessions or pensions.

We collect your medical information including medical history, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and life style risk factors.

How is the information collected?

Information is collected via the patient registration form when patients present to the clinic for the first time.

During the course of providing medical services, the practice health care team will consequently collect further personal information. This practice participates in eHealth using the My Health Record system. Information from your My Health Record may be accessed via the practice clinical team to assist in providing you medical care. This can include: shared health summaries, event summaries, discharge summaries, prescription history and other health information in your personal My Health Record.

As per mandatory requirements in Victoria our GP's also participate in the use of Safe Script. This is to ensure patient safety in responsible prescribing of monitored medicines.

Other personal information may be collected from other health care specialists and health care providers. Our practice receives electronic correspondence using only any encrypted SDI download service.

Personal information is also collected when you make contact with the practice via electronic means including; via the clinic website, telephone, email, social media (Facebook), or making an appointment online.

In some circumstances personal information may also be collected from other sources. On some occasions this is because it is not practical or reasonable to collect it directly from you. This may include information from:

- ✦ your guardian or responsible person



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- ❖ 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).

What will the information be used for?

Our main purpose of collecting, using, holding and sharing your personal information is to manage your health. We also use for directly related business activities, such as financial claims and payments, practice audits, accreditation and business processes including staff training.

If the practice wishes to use your personal information for any other purpose other than what is was provided for, the practice must seek additional consent.

The practice may provide de-identified data to other organisations to improve population health outcomes. The information is secure, cannot identify patients and is shared with the Primary Healthcare Network to improve health services in the area. The information is used for planning health services across the community. If you would prefer not be included in this process you can inform the Operations Manager, Rachael Hatzopoulos, who can ensure you are removed from any de-identified data extraction process.

As a participant in the My Health Record system this practice will provide health information to your individual My Health Record. The practice will also use your information to prepare scripts, health summaries and referral letters. Automated technologies and electronic software is used to generate these items.

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.



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How does the Practice maintain the security of the information?

Your file, including the above information is kept on a secure database in a dedicated clinical patient administration system on the premises. There are multiple security applications protecting this electronic information. All non-electronic information that we receive is transferred into electronic format and paper copies are destroyed through a security contractor with the exemption of disc files received from other medical practices. These are stored in a secure area of the practice.

There are no audio or visual recordings taken during telehealth or any consultations. Should any recordings or images be required during a consultation your consent would be obtained prior. If a health practitioner is working remotely somewhere other than the practice your privacy is still maintained. All systems are only accessed via the individual health provider. Each provider has signed consents for privacy & security including codes of conduct when providing patient care offsite.

What happens if you choose not to provide the information?

You are not obliged to provide us with your personal information. However, if you choose not to provide Ashby Street Medical Centre with your personal details such as your name, address, date of birth etc we may not be able to provide you with a full range of our services and this may affect your care.

Patients can communicate with the practice anonymously via a suggestion box located in the waiting area. 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 can you access and correct your information held by 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 via our designated form. Our practice will respond within 7 days.

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 addressed to 3 Ashby Street Trafalgar, Vic 3824 or via email at reception@ashbystreetmc.com.au.

What can you do if you are not satisfied with the way your information is handled?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the way your information is handled by this practice or wish to make a complaint regarding your privacy please contact our Operations Manager, Rachael Hatzopoulos. 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.

A privacy complaint relates to any concern or dispute that you have with our privacy practices as it relates to your personal information. This could include matters such as how personal information is collected, stored, used, disclosed or how access is provided.

You have the right to provide your complaint anonymously which can be done within the clinic by using our designated locked "Suggestions Box" which is located in the waiting area. You can also submit an anonymous enquiry via the practice website.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of our handling of your complaint you may contact the OAIC (The Officer of the Australian Information Commissioner) by visiting www.oaic.gov.au or calling 1300 363 992.

This privacy policy will be reviewed annually or as required to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur. Patients will be notified of any amendments via the clinic website and displayed within the clinic on the designated slideshow.