

BROADWATER SURGERY

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. The rights of every patient are respected and all information collected by this practice in providing a health service is deemed to be private and confidential. The Practice complies with Federal and State privacy regulations including the Privacy Act 1998, the privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 and as well as the standards set out in the RACGP Handbook for the Management of Health Information in Private Medical Practice 1st Edition (2002).

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 authorized 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.
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
- 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.

How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information may be stored at our practice in various forms.

Our practice stores all personal information securely. All data is stored electronically in password protected format with staff assigned access level appropriate to their level of employment. All staff have signed confidentiality agreements to protect your information

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 to the Business manager and our practice will respond within a reasonable time of 30 days-notice. Dependent on the size of the patients file a minimum fee of \$25 will apply for:

- administration for file searching, collating, etc
- copying or printing records
- postage or courier fees
- facilitating access with intermediaries.

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.

Our practice will take reasonable steps to safeguard patient information when sending information to patients, health organisations or third parties by email, as with any other types of communication.

Our reception staff will advise patients of the privacy risks of the use of unencrypted email and that it could be read by someone other than the intended recipient.

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. All complaints can be addressed to the complaints can be addressed to the Practice Manager, Broadwater Surgery, 3/30 Brisbane Road, Labrador, QLD 4215 or by email to admin@broadwatersurgery.com.au

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.

Privacy and our website

Use of our practice website or social media may provide us with further personal information. As with all other personal information acquired by our practice, all personal information is treated as per the Australian Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act 1988. Our website email contact form is not encrypted. There are potential privacy risks in the use of unencrypted email and as such we cannot take responsibility for personal information you may send to us through this service if it is intercepted. Use of this email service is at your own risk.

Policy review statement

This privacy policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur.