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# Warwick Medical Centre and Skin Clinic Privacy Policy

Current as of: 11<sup>th</sup> of September 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 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.

## What is a health record?

A health record is a confidential compilation of relevant facts of an individual's health history, including all past and present medical conditions, illnesses and treatments, with emphasis on the specific events affecting the patient during the current episode of care. The information documented in the health record is created by all healthcare professionals providing care and is used for continuity of care as provided to the practice from each patient.

## 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 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.
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

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.

We may provide de-identified data to other organisations to improve population health outcomes. The information is secure, patients cannot be identified and the information is stored within Australia. You can let our reception staff know if you do not want your information included.

## Referrals and Health Summaries

During consultation, our doctors may refer you to an external provider to further investigate or treat a condition you may have. In this case, only the relevant information will be included on the referral. We do not send your entire health history or the full file we hold.

Referral letters are critical in integrating the care of patients with external healthcare providers. As per the RACGP's Standards for general practices, Our Referral letters must:

- include the name and contact details of the referring doctor and the practice
- be legible
- include the patient's name and date of birth, and at least one other patient identifier
- explain the purpose of the referral
- contain enough information (relevant history, examination findings and current management) so that the other healthcare provider can provide appropriate care to the patient
- not include sensitive patient health information that is not relevant to the referral
- include a list of known allergies, adverse drug reactions and current medicines
- identify the healthcare setting to where the referral is being made (eg the specialist consultancy).
- If appropriate, referrals could also contain:
  - the name of the healthcare provider to whom the referral is being made, if known
  - any relevant information that will help other healthcare providers deliver culturally safe and respectful care (eg language spoken, the need for an interpreter or other communication requirements).

If you have a concern about your referral, please discuss this with your healthcare professional prior to it being transmitted to the external provider.

For medico-legal and clinical reasons, copies of your referral are retained in your health record.

## How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information may be stored at our practice in various forms, however is predominantly in electronic form unless provided by you or other health professionals in other forms.

Our practice stores all personal information securely. Passwords are individualized and all staff and contractors' complete confidentiality agreements as part of their employment.

## 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 can be sent via email, traditional mail or presented in person. Our practice will respond within a reasonable time (30 days). Should your health record be extensive there may be a reasonable fee to cover the costs associated with providing this information.

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 via email – [manager@warwickmedicalcentre.com.au](mailto:manager@warwickmedicalcentre.com.au) or in person.

## 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. You can obtain a Complaint/ Feedback form from reception or email [reception@warwickmedicalcentre.com.au](mailto:reception@warwickmedicalcentre.com.au) We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with our resolution procedure. We will attempt to resolve all complaints within 30 days and will make initial contact within 5 business days. If you wish to deal with the practice manager directly please email [manager@warwickmedicalcentre.com.au](mailto:manager@warwickmedicalcentre.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](http://www.oaic.gov.au) or call the OAIC on 1300 363 992.

## Privacy and our website

Our website records visits to the site for analytical purposes and no personally identifiable information is retained by [www.warwickmedicalcentre.com.au](http://www.warwickmedicalcentre.com.au). Our online booking provider HotDoc retains information for the purposes of providing healthcare appointments and adheres to the Australian Privacy Principles.

## Policy review statement

**This policy is reviewed annually and updated as required**

**Review due: September 2023**

**Version 1.0**

**Review Cycle Completed:**

**01st May 2023**

**Version 1.1**

**Review due: May 2024**

**Review Cycle completed:**

**11<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

**Review due: September 2025**

