

# Privacy Policy

Current as of: January 2023



This privacy policy describes how your personal information (including health information) is collected and used within our practice, and how we may share it with third parties.

When you register as a patient of our practice, you provide consent for our staff to access and use your personal information so they can provide you with the best possible healthcare. Access to patient information is limited to authorised staff. If we need to use your information for other purposes such as research, we will seek additional consent from you to do this.

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).

## Patient Health Records

---

We retain electronic Patient Health Records on a secure server. Patient health records include information about a patient such as:

- names, date of birth, addresses, contact details (and this information is used to identify you as part of our patient identification process)
- 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
- bank details for direct deposit of Medical rebate
- 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 staff will collect your personal and demographic information during your registration and subsequent visits, or if you contact the practice email, telephone, SMS, or online appointment\*.

Personal information may also be collected from other sources. This may include information from:

- 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)
- your guardian or responsible person.

If unsolicited personal information is received from any other source it will be reviewed by the Practice Manager.

*\*Our online appointment software provider also complies with relevant privacy legislation.*

## Updating personal information

---

Our practice will routinely ask you to verify that your personal information is correct and current. You may also request that we correct or update your information, and you should make such request to [feedback@bullmedicalpractice.com.au](mailto:feedback@bullmedicalpractice.com.au) or written request.

## **When, why and with whom do we share your personal information?**

---

Our practice will not share personal information with any other third party without your consent.

We may request to share relevant personal information via secure electronic means:

- to other healthcare providers such as specialists, pathology and radiology services (note that automated referral templates are reviewed to ensure only relevant medical information is included)
- via 'My Health Record' (eg via Shared Health Summary).
- 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 the Australian Privacy Principles and this policy
- 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 (eg contact tracing for serious infectious disease such as meningococcus)
- when there is a statutory requirement to share certain personal information (eg some diseases require mandatory notification).

Only authorised staff who need to access your information will be able to do so via medical records software access passwords. Passwords are strictly confidential and are routinely changed to ensure ongoing security.

Our practice will not use your personal information for marketing any of our goods or services directly to you without your expressed consent. If you do consent, you may opt out of direct marketing at any time by notifying our practice in writing or directly unsubscribing.

If health information is required to be sent overseas, the Practice will ensure that the security and privacy of the information will comply with Australian Privacy Principles.

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

---

Your personal information will be stored at our practice in various forms e.g., electronic records and limited paper records.

Our practice stores all personal information securely and on-site. All electronic records are stored on a secure, firewall protected server and can only be accessed by authorised staff passwords. All paper records are stored in a staff restricted area. All staff and contractors sign confidentiality agreements as part of their contractual obligations.

## **How can you access your personal information at our practice?**

---

You have the right to request access and update your personal information.

We require you to put this request in writing via email to [feedback@bullimedicalpractice.com.au](mailto:feedback@bullimedicalpractice.com.au) or written request and we will respond within 30 days. A small fee may be applicable, depending on the nature of the request, to cover printing or administrative costs.

## **Privacy Complaints**

---

You should express any privacy concerns you may have in writing or via email to Clinical Services Manager: [feedback@bullimedicalpractice.com.au](mailto:feedback@bullimedicalpractice.com.au) or via telephone: (02 4284 4622). We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with our resolution procedure. We will acknowledge the receipt of your complaint within seven days and endeavour to address your complaint within 30 days.

If you remain unsatisfied, you can contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner. For further information visit [www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au) or call the OAIC on 1300 363 992.

*This Policy is reviewed annually to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur.*