



At Caringbah Family Practice, all patient records are our property (and not the property of either the patient or the medical practitioners). This assists, if the need arises, other medical practitioners in our practice to continue to manage your needs and provide continuity of care.

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 your records. 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:**

- names, date of birth, addresses, contact details, gender
- medical information including medical history, clinical notes, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors
- Medicare number (where available) for identification and claiming purposes
- Insurance details (where applicable)
- Clinical digital images
- healthcare identifiers

## 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 will collect your personal information:**

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. Our practice participates in eHealth services and information may also be collected through Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (eTP) and MyHealth Record system (formerly known as PCEHR) eg via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary.
3. We may also collect your personal information when you telephone or fax us or send us an email.
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
  - Medicare or the Department of Veteran's Affairs

# Who do we share your personal information with?

## **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 Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (eTP), MyHealth Record/PCEHR system (eg via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary).

Only people that are required to access your personal 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 written consent to do so.

Our Practitioners are mindful that only relevant medical information should be included in your referral letters to specialists and allied health professionals. It is the policy of our practice that doctors ask patients to review and approve the automatically generated health summary within their referral.

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?

Our practice may hold your personal information in either electronic or hard copy form. We take reasonable steps, and implement reasonable safeguards, to protect your personal information that we hold from misuse, interference and loss, as well as unauthorised access, modification and disclosure. All information is secure and protected by the use of passwords, secure cabinets, confidentiality agreements for staff and contractors. We ensure that we and the medical practitioners handle all patient information securely and in accordance with this Privacy Policy and professional duties of confidentiality.

## Mandatory data breach notification

The Privacy Act has imposed a mandatory data breach notification scheme for 'eligible data breaches'. An eligible data breach is an authorised access, disclosure or loss of personal information by our practice resulting in serious harm to our patients.

If we believe an eligible breach has occurred resulting in serious harm to our patients, the mandatory notification law requires us to:

- prepare as soon as practicable a statement for the OAIC detailing the breach
- subsequently notify each affected patient of the content of that statement (if not practical, our practice must publish a copy of the statement on our website).

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

On request for access to personal health information, our practice documents each request and endeavours to assist patients in granting access where possible and according to the privacy legislation. Exemptions to access must be noted and each patient or legally nominated representative must have their identification checked prior to access being granted.

Our practice follows this procedure on request for access to personal health information in accordance with privacy legislation:

1. Document the patient's request and forward a request to the patient's GP to check for exemptions
2. Check the patient's or legally nominated representative's identification prior to access being granted.
3. Provide personal health information within reasonable period of time as outlined in the Privacy legislation.

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 your personal information held by our practice is correct and up-to-date. You may also request that we correct or update your information, and you should make such requests in writing to our practice via email: [reception@caringbahfp.com](mailto:reception@caringbahfp.com)

## 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. All complaints will be handled by our Practice Manager within 10 business days. You can email your complaints or concerns to: [concerns@caringbahfp.com](mailto:concerns@caringbahfp.com)

### **Our practice contact details are as follow:**

Caringbah Family Practice  
Suite 4/331-337 Kingsway  
Caringbah NSW 2229  
**Phone:** 02 9525 6666

You may also contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC).

For further information their contact details are as follows:

Phone: 1300 363 992  
Email: [enquiries@oaic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@oaic.gov.au)

**Website:** [www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au)

**Postal Address:** GPO Box 5218 Sydney NSW 2001

### **Policy review statement**

This privacy policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur to Caringbah Family Practice (May 2022).