

# Privacy and Access Policy



## Introduction

The purpose of this privacy policy is to outline how Sunshine City Medical Centre complies with confidentiality and privacy obligations. This document is also to provide information to you, the patient, on how your personal information (which includes your health information) is collected and used within the practice, and the circumstances in which we may share it with third parties. A high level of trust and confidentiality is required to ensure the confidence of the patients we serve.

## Why and when your consent is necessary

When you register as a patient of our practice, you provide consent for the 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?

The practice will need to collect your personal information to provide healthcare services to you. The 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. Patients will be assured that their privacy will be protected when visiting the practice, the information collected and retained is correct and up to date and that they can access their information for review.

## What is the definition of a patient health record and what information is captured?

We collect personal and health related information for the primary purpose of providing comprehensive, ongoing, holistic medical care to individuals and families in accordance with accepted, high quality general medical practice. The minimum personal and health details we require to be able to provide you with safe medical care include your:

- Full name (As held by Medicare)
- Date of birth
- Residential address and postal address
- Contact phone numbers
- Current Medicare number (where available) for identification and claiming purposes
- DVA number
- Current Health Care Card or Pension Card number where appropriate
- Details of any allergies or suspected allergies
- Current drugs or treatments used by the patient
- Previous and current medical history, including where clinically relevant a family medical history
- The name of any health service provider or medical specialist to whom the patient is referred
- Copies of any letters of referrals and copies of any reports back

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To assist us in providing you with the best possible care you will also be asked for information about:

- If you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Your Next of Kin &/or an emergency contact
- Lifestyle information such as nutrition, exercise, smoking & alcohol
- Cultural information such as languages spoken and country of origin

In addition, the Patient Health Record also includes the following information:

- Medical information including current and previous medical history, medications/drugs/treatments used by the patient, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors, name of any health service provide or medical specialist to whom the patient is referred, copies of any letters of referrals and copies of any reports back.

## **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?**

The practice may collect your personal information in several different ways. When you make your first appointment the practice staff will collect your personal and demographic information via your registration. During providing medical services, we may collect further personal information. 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 specialist, allied health professionals, hospital, community health services and pathology and diagnostic imaging services
- Health fund, Medicare, or the Department of Veterans' Affairs (as necessary)

## **How do we inform you about the practice's policies regarding the collection and management of your personal health information?**

We inform you via:

- Brochures in the waiting area
- Patient information Sheet
- New Patient Forms – 'Consent to share information'
- Verbally if appropriate
- The Practice's website

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

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Reviewed by: [Christine Alush, Practice Manager](#)

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Next Review Date: 01-07-2027

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We sometimes share your personal information:

- With third parties who work with the 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 (e.g 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 (e.g. some diseases require mandatory notification)
- During the course of providing medical services, through eTP, My Health Record

Only people who need to access your information will be able to do so. Other than when providing medical services, or as otherwise described in this policy, the 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.

The 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 not consent, you may opt out of direct marketing at any time by notifying the practice in writing.

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## **How informed consent is obtained in real time via telehealth consultation?**

When providing and documenting care during consultation services, patient verification (such as name, address and date of birth) and consent are required prior to conducting the consultation. The consultation is documented in the same complete and accurate way the practitioner would document a physical consultation.

The consulting practitioner will:

- Meet usual obligations to document consultations and usual obligations to maintain a patient health record containing current patient health information held by the practice.
- Obtain verbal informed consent from the patient to proceed with a telephone or video consultation as well as if any other person/third party is present during the consult and document this informed consent, whether the consultation was conducted via telephone or video and in the patient's health record.
- Document clinical findings, diagnosis, diagnostic investigations, procedures or medicines prescribed and documenting if any follow up is required.
- Document any technical malfunctions during the telephone or video consult (eg poor image or sound) that may have compromised the safety or quality of the consultation.

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

Your personal information will be stored at our practice in an electronic form. The practice stores all personal information securely. Using encrypted data and security tools.

## **How can you access and correct your personal information at our practice and how do you obtain informed consent?**

You have the right to request access to, and correction of, your personal information. The practice acknowledges patients may request access to their medical records. We require you to put this request in writing and the practice will respond within a reasonable time, usually 30 days.

The 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 the practice is correct and current. You may also request that we correct or update your information.

## **How do we use document automation technologies?**

As we ensure that your privacy always remains our utmost concern, electronic documents generated by the practice such as referral, medical certificates, etc. utilise appropriate and secure document automation technologies.

The practice utilises a secure medical software, which has a word processing application to generate documents as and when required. This Word processing application has algorithms to automatically import strictly relevant medical information only, required for the patient and for the documentation. The medical software has proper security authentication protocols with unique user credential which can only be accessed by authorised Practice staff according to their roles and responsibilities.

# Privacy and Access Policy



How can you lodge a privacy-related complaint, and how will the complaint be handled at the 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 the practice's resolution procedure.

Please address any concerns to the Practice Manager, Sunshine City Medical Centre, 423 Ballarat Road Sunshine Vic 3020. You can also share your concerns via email at [sunshinecitymedical@gmail.com](mailto:sunshinecitymedical@gmail.com)

These complaints will be handled in a timely manner, usually within 30 days.

You may also contact the Officer of the Australia Information Commissioner (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.

## **Policy Review Statement:**

This privacy policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur and will be updated via our website (<https://sunshinecitymedical.com.au/>) Additionally, it will be reviewed in line with any changes to State of Federal Privacy Laws, as and when required.

The policy was last reviewed on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025. Scheduled date for next review is 1<sup>st</sup> July 2027.