

OTWAY MEDICAL CLINIC - Privacy Policy

Current as of May 1, 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.

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
- 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 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. Our practice has a 'collection statement' within the patient registration form.
2. During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information. Our Practice participates in a variety of eHealth services. eRX (Pharmacy) My Health Record (formerly known as PCEHR), HPOS (Health Professionals Online Service), AIR Australian Immunisation Record and Medclaims (Electronic communications regarding services with Medicare and DVA).
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 Veteran's Affairs (as necessary).

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 (eRx), MyHealth Record/PCEHR system (eg via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary), HPOS (Health Professionals Online Service), AIR Australian Immunisation Record and Medclaims (Electronic communication with Medicare and DVA).

Only people that 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 has a mixture of paper records prior to 2001 and electronic records have been used since this time. Any hardcopy correspondence received is scanned into the electronic clinical record

Our practice stores all personal information securely.

All staff and contractors are bound by strict confidentiality agreements. Personal passwords are used throughout the organization.

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. The request may be by letter or email and our practice will respond to your request within 14 working days. A template form "Request for Personal Health Information" is available for completion.

Depending on the request for information there may be a fee for this service as per the Health Records Act 2001.

To print out – 20 cents a page + GST and there is also a charge for assessing and collating @ \$31.30 + GST for the GP to review the record prior to release. There will also be a postage fee if you are unable to personally collect. The fee will need to be paid prior to release/postage. This link may be helpful.

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/legislation/health-records-act>

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 person at the clinic, by letter or in an email to dianne@otwaymedical.com.au or, frontdesk@otwaymedical.com.au

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.

OTWAY MEDICAL CLINIC – 31-35 CONNOR STREET, COLAC. VIC 3250 PH 03 52315300

Email the Practice Manager: dianne@otwaymedical.com.au

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

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

enquiries@oaic.gov.au

Policy review statement

This privacy policy is reviewed bi-annually. We will update it on our website when there are any changes.