

## Privacy Policy

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### 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 in practice and the circumstances in which we may share it with third parties.

Health e Medical Centre is covered by the Health Privacy Principles the HPPs as set out in the National Privacy Principles (the NPPs as set out in *The Privacy Act (Commonwealth) 1998*).

Health e Medical Centre takes its obligations under the Victorian Health Records Act 2001 and the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 seriously and would like to take all reasonable steps in order to comply and protect the privacy of the personal information that we hold. This policy sets out how we intend to do so:

### Why and when your consent is necessary.

When you register as a patient of our practice, you provide consent for our GP's 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?

Health e Medical Centre collects and holds personal health information to provide healthcare services to you. Our main reason for collecting information from you is so that we may properly assess, diagnose, treat your illnesses and be proactive in your healthcare needs. The information we may ask you is very personal. But not having it may restrict our capacity to provide you with the standard of medical care that you expect.

We also use it for directly related business activities, such as financial claims and payments, practice audits and accreditation and quality improvement of processes. (e.g. 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 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 by asking you to complete [The New Patient Registration Consent Form](#).
2. During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information by MyHealth Record, eg via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary

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Health e Medical Centre		Policy & Procedures Manual	
Uncontrolled Document	Revision No: 4	Revision Date: 14/05/2019	Section 5 Page 1 of 5

## Privacy Policy

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3. We may also collect your personal information when you visit our website, send us an email of SMS, telephone us, make an appointment online 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 is 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 of 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 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. We use practice management software to store electronic records, any paper records, which includes and not limited to X-rays, CT scans, specialist reports etc are scanned to your file

Our practice stores all personal information securely using a practice management software,

Health e Medical Centre		Policy & Procedures Manual	
Uncontrolled Document	Revision No: 2	Revision Date: 01/04/2019	Section 5 Page 2 of 5

## Privacy Policy

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which is only accessible by GP's, Nurses and practice staff who have all signed confidentiality agreements. Practice staff have limited access to records. Any contractors who are onsite are also required to sign confidentiality agreements. If there are hard copy documents they are scanned to your patient file and the hard copy shredded using secure and audited measures.

We also use a document automation technology for referrals so that only your relevant medical information is included.

### 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 by either letter (preferably) or email and our practice will respond within 30 days.

### Overriding Principles

At all times the conduct under this Policy will be governed by the following principles:

- All requests for access will be treated seriously;
- All requests will be dealt with promptly;
- All requests will be dealt with in a confidential manner;

### Forms of Access

Health e Medical Centre will provide access by allowing you to inspect, take notes of or receive copies or printouts of the personal information that the Health e Medical Centre holds about you.

You can make your request in writing by filling out the form supplied by us.

To obtain access you will have to provide proof of your identity. This is necessary to ensure that personal information is provided only to the correct individuals and that the privacy of others is not undermined.

### When will Access be denied?

Access will be denied if:

- The request does not relate to the personal information of the person making the request
- Providing access would pose a serious and imminent threat to life or health of a person
- Providing access would create an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others
- The request relates to legal proceedings between Hampton Bayside Medical Centre and you
- Providing access would prejudice negotiations with the individual making the request
- Access would be unlawful
- Denial of access is authorised or required by law
- Access would prejudice law enforcement activities
- Access discloses a "commercially sensitive" decision making process or information; or
- Any other reason that is provided for in the Health Privacy Principles (HPPs) set out in the Victorian Health Records Act and the National Privacy Principles (NPPs) set out under the Commonwealth Privacy Act.
- Where possible, the Health E Medical Centre will favour providing access. It may do so by providing access to the appropriate parts of, and not the entire record.

### Costs and charges

There is no fee to lodge a request for access. However, Health e Medical Centre will, where possible, charge a reasonable fee to cover administrative costs such as photocopying. There are limits to the fees we can charge and these are prescribed in the *Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)*.

A fee will be charged for the doctor's time spent perusing the notes or explaining them directly to the patient, or rewriting incomprehensible records, in accordance with fees suggested within the *Victorian Health Records Act* and the *Health Records Regulations* or *Freedom of Information* legislation. These charges cannot be claimed on Medicare or Health Funds

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, by either letter 258 Shannon Avenue, Geelong West VIC 3218 or info@hemc.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 and appreciate the opportunity to do so. You should express any privacy concerns you may have in *writing to the Practice Manager, by either letter 258 Shannon Avenue, Geelong West VIC 3218 or info@hemc.com.au*

We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with our resolution procedure within 30 days.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of our handling of your complaint, 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 or [enquiries@oaic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@oaic.gov.au) or visit [www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc)

### Policy review statement

This privacy policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur. When the policy is amended we will upload the revised policy to the website and advise active patients by a flyer in the waiting rooms. The staff at Health e Medical Centre will be advised of any changes in the regular meetings that occur in the practice and notice boards in the staff room.

