



IPC Health GP practice privacy policy

Current as of December 2024

Introduction

The objective of this privacy notice is to provide you, our patient, with clear information on how your personal information is collected and used within the practice. Occasionally we also need to share your personal information to involve others in your healthcare and this policy outlines when, how, and why we share your information.

Who can I contact about this policy?

For enquiries concerning this policy, you can contact: privacy.officer@ipchealth.com.au

Why and when your consent is necessary

When you register as a patient of this practice, you provide consent for the GPs and practice staff to access and use your personal information to facilitate the delivery of healthcare. Access to your personal information is restricted to practice team members who require it for your care. If we ever use your personal information for purposes other than healthcare provision, we will obtain additional consent from you.

It is important to us that as our patient, you understand why we collect and use your personal information.

Why do we collect, use, store, and share your personal information?

The practice collects, uses, stores, and shares your personal information primarily to manage your health safely and effectively. This includes providing healthcare services, managing medical records, and ensuring accurate billing and payments. Additionally, we may utilise your information for internal quality and safety improvement processes such as practice audits, accreditation purposes, and staff training to maintain high-quality service standards.

What personal information is collected?

The information we will collect about you is known as the patient health record and may include your:

- names, date of birth, addresses, contact details
- Next of kin
- 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
- Notes on treatment
- Observations
- Correspondence
- Test results
- Prescription records
- Referrals to other providers/specialists

Can you deal with us anonymously?

You can 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 is personal information collected?

Our practice may collect your personal information in several different ways:

When you make your first appointment, our practice staff will collect your personal and demographic information via your registration.

During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information

Information can also be collected through electronic transfer of prescriptions (eTP) and My Health Record, (eg via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary). 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.

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 Veterans' Affairs (as necessary).
- While providing medical services, further personal information may be collected via:
 - electronic prescribing
 - My Health Record
 - online appointments.

Various types of images may be collected and used, including:

- **CCTV footage:** Collected from our premises for security and safety purposes.
- **Photos and medical images:** These can be taken using personal devices for medical purposes, by following the IPC clinical photography guidelines.

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

We sometimes share your personal information:

- with third parties 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 (e.g., In referral letters)
- 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 it is a statutory requirement to share certain personal information (e.g., some diseases require mandatory notification)
- When it is provision of medical services, through electronic prescribing, My Health Record (e.g., via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary).
- Only people who need to access your personal information will be able to do so. Other than providing medical services or as otherwise described in this policy, the practice will not share personal information with any third party without your consent.
- When we write a referral to other services or specialists our electronic patient record software allows us to choose from a drop-down menu what information is included or excluded. You also have the option to request information not be included, just let your doctor know
- We will not share your personal information with anyone outside Australia (unless under exceptional circumstances that are permitted by law) without your consent.

Will your information be used for marketing purposes?

The practice will not use your personal information for marketing any 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 the practice in writing.

How is your information used to improve services?

The practice may use your personal information to improve the quality of the services offered to patients through research, analysis of patient data for quality improvement and for training activities with the practice team.

We may provide de-identified data to other organisations to improve population health outcomes. The information is secure, patients cannot be identified, and the information is stored within Australia. You can let our reception staff know if you do not want your information included.

How are document automation technologies used?

Document automation is where systems use existing data to generate electronic documents relating to medical conditions and healthcare.

The practice uses document automation technologies to create documents such as referrals, which are sent to other healthcare providers. These documents contain only your relevant medical information.

These document automation technologies are used through secure medical software Best Practice.

All users of the medical software have their own unique user credentials and password and can only access information that is relevant to their role in the practice team.

The practice complies with the Australian privacy legislation and APPs to protect your information.

All data, both electronic and paper are stored and managed in accordance with the Royal Australian College of

General Practitioners [Privacy and managing health information guidance.](#)

How is your personal information stored and protected?

Your personal information may be stored at our practice in various forms including:

- Electronic records
- Paper records
- Our practice stores all personal information securely.
- Electronic records are password protected and access to the software only is by authorised staff only
- Physical or paper records are securely stored and can be accessed only by authorised personnel

The practice stores all personal information securely.

How can you access and correct your personal information at the 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 and our practice will respond within 30 days. You can access the request from reception or emailing ipchealth@ipchealth.com.au

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 ipchealth@ipchealth.com.au

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 30 days. Please send all enquiries to: ipchealth@ipchealth.com.au

Your feedback is important to us, and you can provide it by:

- Emailing ipchealth@ipchealth.com.au
- Sending us a letter by mail to PO Box 171 Deer Park VIC 3023
- Talking to one of our staff on campus
- Calling us on 1300 472 432

If you do not feel we have resolved your issue you may also contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner. The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner will require you to give them time to respond before they investigate. For further information visit www.oaic.gov.au or call the OAIC (Office of the Australian Information Commissioner) on 1300 363 992.

How is privacy on the website maintained?

At IPC Health, any personal information you share with us through website, email, and social media, is handled securely and confidentially.

Policy review statement

Our privacy policy is regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with current obligations.

If any changes are made:

- They will be reflected on the website.
- Significant changes may be communicated directly to patients via email or other means.

Please check the policy periodically for updates. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at: ipchealth@ipchealth.com.au