



Introduction

We are committed to protecting the privacy of patient information and to handling your personal information in a responsible manner in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988, the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012, the Australian Privacy Principles and relevant State and Territory privacy legislation (referred to as privacy legislation).

This Privacy Policy explains how we collect, use and disclose your personal information, how you may access that information and how you may seek the correction of any information. It also explains how you may make a complaint about a breach of privacy legislation.

This Privacy Policy is current from August 2019. From time to time we may make changes to our policy, processes and systems in relation to how we handle your personal information. We will update this Privacy Policy to reflect any changes. Those changes will be available on our website and in the practice.

Collection

We collect information that is necessary and relevant to provide you with medical care and treatment, and manage our medical practice. This information may include your name, address, date of birth, gender, health information, family history, credit card and direct debit details and contact details. This information may be stored on our computer medical records system and/or in hand written medical records.

Wherever practicable we will only collect information from you personally. However, we may also need to collect information from other sources such as treating specialists, radiologists, pathologists, hospitals and other health care providers.

We collect information in various ways, such as over the phone or in writing, in person in our clinic practice or over the internet if you transact with us online. This information may be collected by medical and non-medical staff. We may also collect your personal information when you visit our website or social media page, telephone us or make an online appointment. At this time DCMC do not communicate with patients via email. When you visit our website, a small data file called a "cookie" is stored on your computer or mobile device by our server. We use cookies to maintain user sessions and to generate statistics about the number of people that visit our websites. Generally, this information will not identify you and we do not link it back to your identity or other information that you have provided to us.

We may be required by law to retain medical records for certain periods of time depending on your age at the time we provide services.

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).

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.

Use and Disclosure

We will treat your personal information as strictly private and confidential. We will only use or disclose it for purposes directly related to your care and treatment, or in ways that you would reasonably expect that we may use it for your ongoing care and treatment. For example, the disclosure of blood test results to your specialist or requests for x-rays. There are circumstances where we may be permitted or required by law to disclose your personal information to third parties. For example, to Medicare, Police, insurers, solicitors, government regulatory bodies, tribunals, courts of law, hospitals, or debt collection agents. We may also from time to time provide statistical data to third parties for research purposes.

We may disclose information about you to outside contractors to carry out activities on our behalf, such as an IT service provider, solicitor or debt collection agent. We impose security and confidentiality



requirements on how they handle your personal information. Outside contractors are required not to use information about you for any purpose except for those activities we have asked them to perform.

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, Argus (Argus is a secure, reliable electronic messaging service developed to national standards to enable communication between health care providers), My Health Record and the Australian Immunisation Register

Our clinic collects, holds, uses and discloses Individual Healthcare Identifiers (IHIs) for the purpose of using the My Health Record System. Our clinic uses electronic transfer of prescriptions and may collect, hold or disclose your health information for the purpose of using the eTP service.. Our practice follows the guidelines of the RACGP's Handbook for the management of health information in general practice, 5th edition which incorporates federal and state privacy legislation, and the Australian Privacy Principles, which requires that your personal information is kept private and secure

De-identified data is also sent from DCMC to our local Primary Health Network (PHN) for analysis to help them identify system gaps and work towards developing better health services for the community. Patients not wishing to have their de-identified data passed on from their practice to their local PHN can advise their GP or reception at the time of their appointment.

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.

Data Quality and Security

We will take reasonable steps to ensure that your personal information is accurate, complete, up to date and relevant. For this purpose our staff may ask you to confirm that your contact details are correct when you attend a consultation. We request that you let us know if any of the information we hold about you is incorrect or out of date. You may also request that we correct or update your information, and you should make such requests in writing to the Practice Manager.

Personal information that we hold is protected by:

- securing our premises;
- placing passwords and varying access levels on databases to limit access and protect electronic information from unauthorised interference, access, modification and disclosure; and
- providing locked cabinets and rooms for the storage of physical records. DCMC is a fully computerised practice and as such do not store Xrays or CT scans



DCMC
Diamond Creek
Medical Centre

Privacy Policy

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.

DCMC acknowledges patients may request access to their medical records. We require you to put this request in writing addressed to the Practice Manager and our practice will respond within 30 days. There may be a fee for the administrative costs of retrieving and providing you with copies of your medical records, maximum of \$20 per record.

We may deny access to your medical records in certain circumstances permitted by law, for example, if disclosure may cause a serious threat to your health or safety. We will always tell you why access is denied and the options you have to respond to our decision.

Complaints We take complaints and concerns regarding privacy seriously. If you have a complaint about the privacy of your personal information, we request that you contact us in writing, which can be done anonymously if you prefer. Address correspondence to Practice Manager Diamond Creek Medical Centre , 82 Main Hurstbridge road Diamond Creek 3089. Upon receipt of a complaint we will consider the details and attempt to resolve it in accordance with our complaints handling procedures within 30 days.

If you are dissatisfied with our handling of a complaint or the outcome you may make an application to the Australian Information Commissioner or the Privacy Commissioner in Victoria. You may also contact the Office of the Australian 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 or call the OAIC on 1300 363 992

Contact

Please direct any queries, complaints, requests for access to medical records to:

Practice Manager
Diamond Creek Medical Centre
82 Main Hurstbridge Road Diamond Creek
3089

Ph 94381911

Further information on privacy legislation is available from:

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
1300 363 992
www.oaic.gov.au

Office of the Health Services Commissioner
Victoria – 1300 582 113
www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc/index.htm