

Privacy Policy



Introduction

East Bentleigh Medical Group complies with both State and Federal Privacy Legislation.

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 our 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 (e.g., staff training).

What personal information do we collect?

The information we will collect about you includes your:

- 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 impractical for us to do so or unless we are required or authorized 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 via your registration.
2. During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information, such as electronic transfer of prescription (eTP), My health record, and via Shared Health Summary.
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.
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 also 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).

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 (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 (e.g., via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary)

Only people who need access to 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 not consent, you may opt out of direct marketing at any time by notifying our practice in writing.

Our practice may use your personal information to improve the quality of the services we offer to our patients through research and analysis of our patient data.

We may provide de-identified data to other organisations to improve population health outcomes. The information is secure, patient 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.

Our practice may provide your personal information to SEMPHN for medical compliance.

How do we store and protect your personal information?

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

- your medical file is stored on our secure password protected software in electronic form
- any photos we take in the course of a consultation (such as during skin checks) are stored in a secure electronic file
- all correspondence received from external sources (such as specialists' letters, hospital discharge summaries) regarding you personally are scanned into your personal file and the paper copy destroyed
- all reports from providers (such as pathology laboratories or diagnostic imaging providers) in paper form are scanned on to your personal file and the paper copy destroyed

Our practice stores all personal information securely. All staff sign a confidentiality agreement, and clinical staff only have access to your health information. All staff use individual log on codes and passwords to access our software.

Our electronic system is backed up both off site and onsite in a secure manner.

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 make a request in writing to The Practice Manager, East Bentleigh Medical Group, 873 Centre Road, Bentleigh East, 3165 and our practice will respond within 30 days of receiving the request. You will be advised in advance of fees that may be associated providing this information such as photocopying or registered postage.

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, reception will ask you to verify your personal information held by our practice so we can be sure it is correct and current. You may also request that we correct or update your information, and you should make such requests with your general practitioner, or writing to the Practice Manager, East Bentleigh Medical Group, 873 Centre Road, Bentleigh East. 3165.

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 to the Practice Manager, East Bentleigh Medical Group, 873 Centre Road, Bentleigh East, 3165 or you can call and ask for the Practice Manager on 9579 2077. We will then attempt to resolve your concerns in accordance with our resolution procedure. You can expect to hear from us within 30 days of receiving your concerns.

You may also contact the OAIC (Office of the 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 in 1300 36 992.

Policy review statement

This privacy policy is reviewed annually to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur. The most updated version is available on our website, to be viewed or printed or patients can ask for a copy from reception.

Updated 22 February 2024