



# McLeod Street MEDICAL

## Privacy Policy

### 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 at McLeod Street Medical, you provide consent for the 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.

### 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 impracticable for us to do so or unless we are required or authorised by law to only deal with identified individuals.

The following are examples of where a law or order may require or authorise us to deal only with an identified individual:

- Processing an individual's application for an identity document (such as a passport, licence, or security pass).
- Paying a healthcare benefit to an eligible individual.
- Providing assistance to an individual who has been diagnosed with a disease that must be recorded and notified under a public health law.
- Providing assistance to a suspected victim of child abuse, whose injury is covered by a mandatory reporting requirement.
- Discussing the individual's personal information with them, such as the individual's account information.

- Giving access to the individual's personal information under the Privacy Act or Freedom of Information Act 1982.

### **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. Information may also be collected through electronic transfer of prescriptions (eTP), My Health Record.
3. We may also collect your personal information when you send us an email or SMS, telephone us or 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 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 (eg via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary).

Only people who need to access your information will be able to do so. Other than while 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.

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, 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 do we store and protect your personal information?**

Your personal information is stored at our practice securely in electronic format in a secured environment. Practice computers and servers comply with the RACGP computer security checklist, and we have a sound back up system and a contingency plan to protect the practice from loss of data.

Computer screens that display information about individuals have automated screen savers and practice staff and doctors have different levels of access to patient health information. To protect the security of health information, GPs and other practice staff do not give their computer passwords to others.

Whenever sensitive documentation is discarded the practice uses shredding and a secure shredding bin for destruction. Computer drives are sent to the practice IT specialists for destruction and memory sticks are reformatted.

Electronic information is transmitted over the public network in an encrypted format using secure messaging software.

Incoming patient correspondence and diagnostic results are opened by a designated staff member.

Every member of the practice team is aware of our Privacy Policy and has signed a privacy statement as part of their terms and conditions of employment or contract. This privacy statement continues to be binding even after the employment or contract has terminated.

### **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 and deliver either by email, mail or in person and our practice will respond within 30 days. There is a fee associated with providing this information.

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 either in writing or in person.

### **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. Please address your concerns to:

The Practice Manager

67 McLeod Street,

Cairns. QLD. 4870

Ph: 07 40521 583

Email: [admin@mcleodstmed.com.au](mailto:admin@mcleodstmed.com.au)

We will respond to your complaint within 30 days of receipt.

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](http://www.oaic.gov.au) or call the OAIC on 1300 363 992. The Office of the Health Ombudsman for Queensland can be contacted on 133 646 or through their website [www.oho.qld.gov.au](http://www.oho.qld.gov.au).

### **Policy review statement**

Our privacy policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur. If the policy is amended, we will notify patients by placing a notice on our website and through signage at the practice.