

Metta Medical Centre Privacy Policy

Current as of: [May 2024]

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 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. The information you provide becomes part of your health record. Your health record documents in detail all interactions with your health care provider, all clinical findings, diagnostic test results, pre and post operative care, progress, medications, allergies, past conditions and social factors that affect your health and wellbeing. 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. This includes:

- Presence of third parties during a consultation (e.g. Medical students, interpreters, other family members etc)
- Real-time audio-visual recording and duplication and storage of a consultation, including those during telehealth and those conducted remotely

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 (eg 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 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 via your registration.
2. During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information.
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 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 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 (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. When we request consent to update and/or send your health summary or referrals to approved parties (paramedics, hospital, specialists or community health providers), we will confirm any information you would like omitted, as well as electing to omit information that is not relevant to your referral. Our practice software enables us to deselect information such as medications, diagnosis or social history from appearing on your health summary.

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.

Our practice uses automated technologies from within our clinical software to ensure that only relevant information is provided in referrals.

When is consent required to share personal information?

Consent will be required when the practice duplicates or records a consultation. Consent will be required if a third party attends during a consultation. This consent could be verbal or written. You have the right to refuse your consent.

How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information may be stored at our practice in various forms. . E.g.: paper records, electronic records, visual records (X-rays, CT scans, videos and photos), audio recordings

Our practice stores all personal information securely in practice software called Best Practice. Our server and computers are protected with professional Firewall and Internet Security Software which are regularly updated and backed up.

Our practice stores all personal information securely.

If your consultation takes place via telehealth, the practitioner will always ensure your privacy is maintained by undertaking the consultation in a private setting, whether this is at the clinic facilities or via remote access.

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 our practice will respond within a reasonable time, usually within 10 business day. There will be a fee of \$30 for the transfer of records to another clinic. The fee may vary if the transfer of medical records needs to be reviewed by your regular GP before the transfer of records and you will be informed of the fee.

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 by emailing to reception@mettamedical.com.au or post to Shop 1280 Level 1,200 Karrinyup Road,Karrinyup,WA 6018.

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 contact the practice manager about your complaint by email to team@mettamedical.com.au or post to Shop 1280 Level 1,200 Karrinyup Road,Karrinyup,WA 6018.

We will contact you in 5 business days and explore the possible solution relating to your complaint. 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 investigate. For further information visit www.oaic.gov.au or call the OAIC on 1300 363 992.

Privacy and our website

We may collect your personal information if you contact through the online enquiry form in our website. We may also collect your personal information if you interact with us through social medias such as Facebook.

Telehealth and Privacy

All telehealth consultations that take place from our practice are undertaken within a private consulting room. Where telehealth consultations take place through practitioners having remote access to practice systems our practice insists that all remote access is undertaken from a private and secure location in line with the RACGP's 'Information security in general practice for remote access guidelines'.

In cases where an interpreter is required for a telehealth consultation, our practice ensures that the interpreter can be effectively connected to our telehealth platform when they cannot be present in person. Our practice always engages a qualified medical interpreter.

Policy review statement

This privacy policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur. You will be able to access our latest privacy through our website or from our receptionist on request.

Disclaimer

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