

The objective of this document 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.

We will always comply with privacy obligations when collecting personal information from third-party sources. This includes ensuring transparency with patients, obtaining necessary consents, maintaining data accuracy, securing the information, and using it only for specified purposes.

Please take the time to read through this document and feel free to contact our practice with the details we have provided.

1. Who can I contact about this policy?

For enquiries concerning this policy, you can contact admin or ask to speak to or be contacted by the practice manager.

2. When and why is your consent 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 outlined in this document, 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.

By acknowledging this Privacy Policy you consent to us collecting, holding, using, retaining and disclosing your personal information in the manners described below.

3. 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.

4. What personal information is collected?

The information we will collect about you includes your:

- names, date of birth, addresses, contact details, emergency contact, next of kin, ethnicity
- medical information including medical history, medicines, allergies, and adverse reactions immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors
- Medicare number (where available) for identification and claiming purposes
- healthcare identifier numbers
- health fund details.
- contact and demographic information
- medical history

- notes on treatment
- observations
- correspondence
- investigations
- test results photographs
- prescription records
- medication charts
- insurance information
- legal information and reports
- work health and safety reports
- Real-time audio/visual recording and duplication and storage of a consultation, including those via telehealth and those conducted remotely (This will never occur without the patient's consent).

5. 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. Helensvale Medical Centres will refer patients who choose not to identify themselves to public hospitals, for patient safety and to reduce medico-legal risk.

The OAIC website provides further information in this topic .

6. How is personal information collected?

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

When you make your first appointment, the practice team will collect your personal and demographic information via your registration. 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, including:

- 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 (if relevant).
- While providing medical services, further personal information may be collected via:
 - o electronic prescribing
 - o My Health Record

- o online appointments.
- o The National Cancer Screening Register
- o Australian Immunisation Register.

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

- CCTV footage: Collected from the shopping centre cameras for security and safety purpose
- Photos and medical images: These can be taken using personal devices for medical purposes, following the guidelines outlined in our guide on using personal devices for medical images. The RACGP resource provides further information

7. 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, pathology and Imaging requests, smart referrals)
- 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), The National Cancer Screening Register, The Australian Immunisation Register.

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.

We do not share your personal information with anyone outside Australia (unless under exceptional circumstances that are permitted by law) without your consent. Many countries do not offer privacy laws that afford you the privacy and protection as Australian law (this includes how it is stored and who can access it). For more information on this visit [Sending personal information overseas | OAIC](#)

<https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-guidance-for-organisations-and-government-agencies/handling-personal-information/sending-personal-information-overseas#section-how-do-i-know-if-i-am-allowed-to-send-personal-information-to-a-specific-country>

8. 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 express consent. If you do consent, you may opt out of direct marketing at any time by notifying the practice in writing. By Law, we are not allowed to use patient testimonials or disclose patient identities for marketing purposes.

9. 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. Once your information is de-identified, it becomes data, which is a collection of information that can be then coded and analysed for various improvement activities including planning for flu season & vaccination orders.

We may provide de-identified data to other organisations to improve population health outcomes as allowable under the privacy legislation. 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 identified information included.

De-identified data cannot be linked back to individual patients. We use this for:

- Quality Improvement activities at the practice
- Accreditation
- Staff to participate in medical training/teaching.
- Gold Coast Primary Health Network to inform local health needs and services
- Planning, staffing and preparations for future clinics or services

Where identified patient data may be used for these allowable secondary uses, your express consent will be obtained and documented.

At times, general practices are approached by research teams to recruit eligible patients into specific studies which require access to identifiable information. You may be approached by a member of our practice team to participate in research. Researchers will not approach you directly without your express consent having been provided to the practice. If you provide consent, you would then receive specific information on the research project and how your personal health information will be used, at which point you can decide to participate or not participate in the research project.

10. 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 Medical Director.

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 .

11. How are Artificial Intelligence (AI) Scribes used?

Some of the GPs in this practice use an AI scribe tool to support GPs take notes during their consultations with you. The AI scribe uses an audio recording of your consultation to generate a clinical note for your health record. The GPs use a range of AI scribe tool to draft consultation notes. They review these notes before inserting them into the medical record. These products include Heidi and MBSpro

The GPs only use AI scribes that do not share information outside of Australia. The audio file is destroyed once the transcription is complete and the transcription is not saved once the final copy is inserted into the medical record. If the GP chooses to retain a copy of the transcription all sensitive and personal identifying information is removed.

The practice will only use data from our digital scribe service to provide healthcare to you. You can ask your doctor or nurse not to use an AI Scribe if you prefer

12. How is your personal information stored and protected?

Your personal information may be stored in various forms. These include paper records, electronic records, visual records (e.g., X-ray and photos)

Personal information that we hold is protected by:

- confidentiality agreements for staff and contractors
- securing the premises
- placing extensive security measures across the computer network and monitoring these 24/7
- placing passwords and varying access levels on databases to limit access and protect electronic information from unauthorised interference, access, modification and disclosure
- providing locked cabinets and rooms for the storage of physical records

The practice stores all personal information securely

13. 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.

The practice acknowledges patients may request access to their medical records. This is not the same as just asking for a copy of your records.

The preferred process is that you make an appointment to review your record with your GP. This service is not rebate-able through Medicare and the fee is the same price as a standard consultation. If you are unable to attend the practice, please contact the practice manager via email

The practice will respond to any requests to access or correct your personal information within 28 days of receipt of your written request.

The practice will take reasonable steps to correct your personal information where the information is not accurate or up to date. Sometimes, we will ask you to verify your personal information held by

the practice is correct and current. You may request we correct or update your information. To do this please contact the practice manager via

14. 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. We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with the resolution procedure. If you are unhappy with any aspect of the care or service you receive from this practice, please ask for a feedback form, send an email, speak to one of the doctors, the practice manager or the reception staff, and we will endeavour to address the problem. If you still have concerns, please submit them in writing to the Practice Manager via the reception email addresses. You will receive a response within 14 days.

In order to protect patient privacy, we are unable to respond publicly to any complaints or negative reviews left on social media forums.

Practice Manager

HELENSVALE MEDICAL CENTRE

Shop 1037 / 8 Millaroo Drive

Westfield Shopping Centre

HELENSVALE QLD 4212 TEL 07 5519 4344

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 or call the OAIC (Office of the Australian Information Commissioner) on 1300 363 992. Alternatively the state contact is

The Office of the Health Ombudsman

PO Box 13281 George Street

Brisbane Qld 4003

Phone 133OHO 133646 Fax 07 3319 6350

15. How is privacy on the website maintained?

At Helensvale Medical Centre any personal information you share with us through website, email, and social media, is handled securely and confidentially. This practice uses analytics and cookies.

16. Electronic communication with our practice (Email)

Patients who contact and request the transmission of personal health information by electronic means, including email, accept that this is not a secure form of communication.

All requests for transmission of personal health information to Helensvale Medical Centre must be emailed; by doing so you accept the risks associated with this form of communication.

Helensvale Medical Centre will always take all possible precautions to ensure the security and protection of personal information. It is part of our duty of care that we protect your privacy from others & ensure we have the correct patient & file for your consultation, this means we will always

ask you to identify yourself with your name, DOB & a contact detail such as an address or phone number (even if we know you).

17. 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.

This Practice follows the Guidelines on Privacy in the Private Health Sector developed by the Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner. This means that your personal health information is kept private and secure.