

Denmark Medical Centre

Privacy Policy Information Sheet

Revised 4th January 2018

Introduction

Denmark Medical Centre respects your privacy and is committed to protecting personal information you provide to us. 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.

Patients will be assured that:

- ❖ their privacy will be protected when visiting the Medical Centre;
- ❖ the information collected and retained in our records is correct and up-to-date; and
- ❖ that they can access their information for review.

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. 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 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).

Your Health information

Denmark Medical Centre recognises the information we collect is often of a highly sensitive nature and as an organisation we have adopted the highest privacy compliance standards relevant to our practice to ensure personal information is protected.

For administrative and billing purposes, and to enable the patients to be attended to by other medical practitioners at Denmark Medical Centre, patient information is shared between the medical practitioners and other health providers at the practice. Denmark Medical Centre and the medical practitioners may collect personal information regarding patients (including health information) for the purpose of providing medical services and treatment.

What information is collected

Personal information collected will generally include:

- ❖ the patient's name, address, telephone number and Medicare number, healthcare identifiers;
- ❖ current drugs or treatments used by the patient;
- ❖ current and previous medical history, including, where clinically relevant, a family medical history; and
- ❖ the name of any health service provider or medical specialist to whom the patient is referred, copies of any letters of referrals and copies of any reports back.

We inform our patients about our practice's policies regarding the collection and management of their personal health information via:

- ❖ a notice on the power point display at reception;

- ❖ brochures in the waiting area;
- ❖ our patient information sheet;
- ❖ new patient forms – ‘Consent to share information’;
- ❖ verbally if appropriate; and
- ❖ the practice website.

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 we collect your personal information

Our practice may collect your personal information in several different ways.

- ❖ directly from you
- ❖ when you make your first appointment our practice staff will collect your personal and demographic information via your registration.
- ❖ during the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information. This may be through electronic transfer of prescriptions (eTP) or My Health Record.
- ❖ 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. 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).

Use or disclosure of 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 (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), SmartVac program.
- ❖ for the purpose advised to the patient at the time of collection of the information
- ❖ as required to the delivery of health services

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.

The consequences of not providing all or part of the information requested

There may be serious repercussions if we do not know who you are, how to contact you or be able to contact you in a timely manner. Withholding personal health information from your GP or others involved in your health care may put your life or health at risk.

Security of information collected

Other than as described in this Policy or permitted under privacy principles, Denmark Medical Centre uses all reasonable endeavors to ensure that identifying health information is not disclosed to any person unnecessarily or irresponsibly.

Due to the sensitive nature of the information collected by the Medical Centre to provide its services, extra precautions are taken to ensure the security of that information. Information may be stored electronically and/or in hard copy form. All electronically stored files are password protected on several levels, and regular backups of data are performed.

Denmark Medical Centre requires its employees to observe obligations of confidentiality in the course of their employment with all staff and contractors signing Confidentiality Agreements.

How long are medical records kept?

Denmark Medical Centre keeps health information for a minimum of 15 years from the date of last entry in the patient records unless the patient is/was a child in which case the record is kept until the patient attains or would have attained 25 years of age.

Accessing and correcting your personal information.

You have the right to request access to, and correction of, your personal information.

We require you to put any requests for access or correction of medical records to us in writing and our practice will respond within 30 days of lodging a request. Identification will be required. A fee may apply, and will be determined by the size of the requested record/file.

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 in writing to us at the address below.

There are certain circumstances where access may be denied under the 'Privacy Act' or other laws. For example, access can be denied when letting a patient see their records would pose a serious threat to the patient's life or health, or the life or health of someone else (such as a relative, the health service provider, staff or other patients).

The threat must be significant, for example where there is a serious risk the patient may cause self-harm or harm to another person if they saw the information. The threat can be a risk of danger to physical or mental health, but does not need to be imminent - it can be a serious threat that might occur sometime after access is granted.

Can I transfer my medical records to a new medical practitioner?

Patients have the right to attend a medical practitioner of their choice and are free to leave the practice and attend another if they wish.

How do I arrange this?

There is a professional obligation for a medical practitioner to provide a new treating medical practitioner with all of the information that they need to take over a patient's care.

This is usually done by the patient completing a 'transfer of file' request and producing an original source of identification for the receptionist to make a copy of.

When a patient requests that their health records be transferred to a medical practitioner outside Denmark Medical Centre, the medical practitioner has an obligation to provide a copy or summary of the patient health record in a timely manner to facilitate care of the patient.

For medico-legal reasons, our practice retains the original record and provides the new medical practitioner with a summary or a copy. If a summary of the patient's health record is provided to the new medical practitioner, a copy of the summary should be kept on file for record purposes.

A patient can also have a copy of his/her medical records transferred to their new practice by completing and signing a written request at the new practice.

Can the doctor charge for the handing over of medical records?

Some medical practitioners may charge a fee for handling and copying their records to cover the administrative costs involved. The previous medical practitioner may charge a fee for providing a summary, especially if a patient's medical history is long and/or complex. Denmark Medical Centre charges a fee to forward records to another practice.

Website privacy

Denmark Medical Centre web site provides links to other third party web sites. Even if the third party is affiliated with Denmark Medical Centre through a business partnership or otherwise, Denmark Medical Centre is not responsible for the privacy policies or practices or the content of such external links. These links are provided to you for convenience purposes only and you access them at your own risk.

Your privacy is important to us and we want you to feel comfortable visiting our website. Any personal information that patients provide us, including e-mail addresses, will be used only in the following ways:

- ❖ personal data given to us by you will be securely stored,
- ❖ we will not provide your personal data to any third party without your permission,
- ❖ we do not automatically collect your personal e-mail address simply because you visit our site,
- ❖ if we join with a third party to provide services and you sign up for those services, we will share your name and other contact information necessary for our partner to provide the services to you,
- ❖ if you view specific pages or download information from specific pages on our website, we will track and add the number of your visits to the aggregate number of visits by all users in order to better design our website,

By using Denmark Medical Centre's website, you consent to the collection and use of your personal information as detailed in this Privacy Policy. We will post any changes to this Privacy Policy on our website so that you are kept up to date with the type of information we collect and the ways in which we use it.

Changes to the Privacy Policy

Denmark Medical Centre has the right to change the Privacy Policy at any time. If there are updates to Denmark Medical Centre's Privacy Policy, we will address the changes promptly and update the revision date of this document.

Obtaining further information

If patients require more information regarding Denmark Medical Centre, its services and facilities, they can:

- ❖ ask a staff member;
- ❖ access Denmark Medical Centre's website;
- ❖ request a full copy of our privacy policy and collection statement; or
- ❖ take a copy of Denmark Medical Centre's Information Sheet' available at the reception desk.

Complaints

If you have any concern please contact our Privacy Officer.

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.

Complaints will be acknowledged within 2 working days.

Our privacy officer will work with you to resolve the complaint and communicate the outcome.

If the matter cannot be you may also contact the 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 information

If you have any queries regarding our Privacy Policy please contact:

The Privacy Officer
Denmark Medical Centre
3 Mount Shadforth Rd
Denmark WA 6333
P: 08 9848 4111
F: 08 9848 2192
E: mary@denmarkmedicalcentre.com.au

Disclaimer

While we make every effort to protect your privacy, we may need to disclose personal information when required by law where we have a good-faith belief that such action is necessary to comply with a current judicial proceeding, a court order or legal process served on our company or site.