



WYEE MEDICAL CENTRE

PRIVACY POLICY: Managing Patient Health Information

Policy updated: February 13, 2026

In New South Wales (NSW), health records are defined as any identifiable information or opinion held by an organisation about a person's health, health services provided and their wishes about future health services. This includes personal non-health related information collected in the course of providing health services, as well as medical test results, medical imaging reports, and clinical notes. The Health Records (Privacy and Access) Act 1997 (ACT) covers health information that may identify a person; while de-identified health information is not protected under the Act.

Purpose of the Privacy Policy.

To ensure patients who receive care from the Practice are comfortable in entrusting their health information to the Practice. This policy provides information to patients as to how their personal information (which includes their health information) is collected and used within the Practice, and the circumstances in which we may disclose it to third parties.

Related Standards.

RACGP Compliance indicators for the Australian Privacy Principles (APP): and addendum to the computer and information security standards (Second edition).

Background and rationale.

The APP provide a privacy protection framework that supports the rights and obligations of collection, holding, using, accessing and correcting personal information. The APP consist of 13 principle-based laws and apply equally to paper-based and digital

environments. The APP complement the long-standing, general practice obligation to manage personal information in a regulated, open and transparent manner.

The policy will guide Practice Staff in meeting these legal obligations. It also details to patients how the Practice uses their personal information. The policy must be made available to patients upon request.

When the Doctor contacts a patient via telehealth / telephone for a consultation the patient will be asked for consent before the consultation is commenced. This consent is recorded in the patient consultation notes. This informed consent is for real-time audio/visual recording, duplication and storage of a consultation, including those conducted via Telehealth or conducted remotely. (Refer to further information on the Telehealth Policy and Procedure for General Medical Practice).

If the Doctor needs to refer the patient to a Specialist, then only the relevant medical information is included in the referral letters.

Practice Procedure

The Practice will:

- Provide a copy of this policy upon request
- Ensure staff comply with the APP and deal appropriately with inquiries or concerns
- Take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to implement practices, procedures and systems to ensure compliance with the APP and deal with inquiries or complaints
- Collect personal information for the primary purpose of managing a patient's healthcare and for financial claims and payments.

Staff Responsibility

The Practice staff will take reasonable steps to ensure patients understand:

- What information has been, and is being, collected
- Why the information is being collected, and whether this is due to a legal requirement
- How the information will be used or disclosed
- Why and when their consent is necessary
- The Practice's procedures for address and correction of information, and responding to complaints of information breaches, including by providing this policy

Patient Consent

The Practice will only interpret and apply a patient's consent for the primary purpose for which it was provided. The Practice staff must seek additional consent from the patient if the personal information collected may be used for any other purpose.

Collection of information

The Practice will need to collect personal information as a provision of clinical services to a patient at the Practice. Collected personal information will include patients':

- Names, addresses and contact details for the patient and Emergency contact and Next of Kin details, Medicare number (where applicable) for identification and claiming purposes
- Healthcare identifiers
- Medical information including medical history, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors.

A patient's personal information may be held at the Practice in various forms:

- As paper records (not commonly used)
- As electronic records
- As visual – x-rays, CT scans, videos and photos
- As audio recordings

The Practice's procedure for collecting personal information is set out below:

1. Practice staff collect patient's personal and demographic information via registration when patients present to the Practice for the first time. Patients are encouraged to pay attention to the information of the New Patient Registration Form and the Information form on the Management of collected information and patient privacy.
2. During the course of providing medical services, the Practice's healthcare Practitioners will consequently collect further personal information.
3. Personal information may also be collected from the patient's guardian or responsible person (where practicable and necessary), or from any other involved healthcare specialists.

The Practice holds all personal information securely, whether in electronic format, in protected information systems or in hard copy format in a secured environment.

Use and Disclosure of Information.

Personal information will only be used for the purpose of providing medical services and for claims and payments, unless otherwise consented to. Some disclosure may occur to third parties engaged by, or for, the Practice for business purposes, such as accreditation or for the provision of information (for example, some diseases require mandatory notification).

The Practice will not disclose personal information to any third party other than in the course of providing medical services, without the full disclosure to the patient or the recipient, the reason for the information transfer and full consent from the patient. The Practice will not disclose personal information to anyone outside Australia without need and without patient consent.

Exceptions to disclose without patient consent are where the information is:

- Required by law
- 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 a confidential dispute resolutions process.

The Practice will not use any personal information in relation to direct marketing to a patient without that patient's express consent. Patients may opt-out of direct marketing at any time by notifying the Practice in a letter or email.

The Practice evaluates all unsolicited information it receives to decide if it should be kept, acted on, or destroyed.

Access, Corrections and Privacy Concerns.

The Practice acknowledges patients may request access to their medical records. Patients are encouraged to make this request in writing, and the Practice will respond within a reasonable time.

The Practice will take reasonable steps to correct personal information where it is satisfied that the information is not accurate or up to date. From time to time, the Practice will ask patients to verify the personal information held by the Practice is correct and up to date. Patients may also request the Practice corrects or updates their information, and patients should make such requests in writing.

The Practice take complaints and concerns about the privacy of patients' personal information seriously. Patients should express any privacy concerns in writing. The Practice will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with its complaint resolution procedure.

Reference: *The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners APP Privacy Policy: Managing patient health information.*

Procedure and Policy updated: February 13, 2026

Updated by: Christine Wild, Practice Manager

Next Update due: February 13, 2027