PRIVACY POLICY

Reviewed : May 2024

Our practice has used the privacy policy template available from the RACGP and this has been adapted to reflect how our practice collects and uses personal information. Our privacy policy is displayed in the waiting room and also on the practice information sheet and practice website, and is readily available.

Introduction

This Privacy Policy is to provide information to you on how your personal information (which includes your sensitive information, including your health information) is collected, used and stored within our practice, **LINDFIELD FAMILY MEDICINE (ABN 96 625 413 336),** and the circumstances in which we may share it with third parties.

A central electronic patient health record is created and maintained for all patients registering with the practice and this record will hold information which may include contact and demographic information, medical history, notes on treatment, observations, correspondence, investigations, test results, photographs, prescription records, medication charts, insurance information and legal and occupational health and safety reports. This is referred to as the Patient Health Record.

Why and how your consent is necessary

When you register as a patient of a doctor who consults from our practice, you provide consent for us (including our employees, agents, contractors and other representatives) to access and use your personal information so the general practitioners operating from our practice can provide you with the best possible healthcare. Only persons who need to see your personal information will have access to it.

We will always seek your informed and/or written consent for :

* Clinical procedures / medical treatments (written consent)
* For real time audio/visual recordings for the hosting of telephone/ video consultations and the recording and storing of the consultation notes on your patient record. (informed verbal consent)
* SMS Appointment reminders
* Health reminders and preventative health activities.

Why we collect, use, hold and share your personal information

Our practice will need to collect your personal information to facilitate the provision of healthcare services to you by the independent medical practitioners operating from our practice. Our main purpose for collecting, using, holding and sharing your personal information is to facilitate the management of your health by those independent medical practitioners. 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).

Personal Information we collect

* The information we collect about you include you’re:
* names, date of birth, addresses, contact details including emergency contact and
* next of kin;
* demographic information, including gender, cultural background, and religious
* beliefs;
* 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;
* payment and / or financial information
* concession card details; and
* 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.
* Please be aware that Medicare rebates are only available where a Medicare card (and / or associated information) is available. As such your doctor may require you to pay for your consults in full without this rebate if you choose to deal with us anonymously or under a pseudonym.

How We Collect Your Personal Information

Our practice may collect your personal information in several ways:

1. You may provide us with your personal information directly (for example, when you make an appointment with a medical practitioner operating from our practice, our practice staff will collect your personal and demographic information via your registration).
2. The medical practitioners providing medical services may also collect further personal information from you which may be disclosed to us. Information can also be collected through My Health Record, e.g., via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary or through a Discharge Summary provided by a hospital or other healthcare service providers.
3. We may also collect your personal information when you contact us via 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; and / or your health fund, Medicare, or the Department of Veterans’ Affairs (as necessary).
* If a clinician deems it in your best interest to discuss your clinical information with you, we will arrange for this to occur either in person, via telephone or via videoconference.

When, Why and with Whom we use and share your personal information

1. We collect, use and disclose your personal information to facilitate the provision of medical services to you by the independent medical practitioners operating from our practice.

2. We may also share your personal information:

* with other healthcare providers;
* when it is required or authorised by law (e.g., court subpoenas, or where we are obliged to make a mandatory notification to a regulatory body);
* 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 where it is otherwise impractical to
		- obtain your consent;
* to assist in locating a missing person;
* to establish, exercise or defend a claim;
* or the purposes of confidential dispute resolution processes;
* during the course of providing nursing support services;
* for the purposes of uploading that information to your My Health Record, such as through the shared health summary or event summary; and / or
* 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 the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) and this policy.

HOW WE SEND PERSONAL INFORMATION TO OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

1. We will always use encrypted secure messaging services for the sending and receiving of your personal health information.
2. We will always seek your verbal consent in additional to any written consent when responding to any requests to access your personal information to third parties for example Insurance applications or workers compensation claims
3. Any outgoing information that uses document automation technology for the autofil of personal information such as for electronic prescriptions or the writing of specialist referrals, will only include personal and clinical information that it is essential to that referral or escript.
4. Only people who need to access your information will be able to do so. Other than in the course of facilitating the provision of medical services or as otherwise described in this policy, our practice will not share personal information with any third party without your consent.
5. We will not share your personal information with anyone outside Australia (unless under exceptional circumstances that is permitted by law) without your consent.
6. 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

HOW WE STORE AND PROTECT YOUR INFORMATION

Your personal information may be stored at our practice in various forms.

1. Our practice stores information electronically (including via cloud-based services), visual (including photos) and archived paper records. All electronic systems and backups are maintained to highest standards with respect to privacy and security.

2. Our practice stores all personal information securely via the use of passwords, encrypted back-ups, confidentiality agreements for staff and secure cabinets.

 3. All records will be retained until the later of seven (7) years from your last contact with the practice, or until you reach the age of twenty-five (25).

4. We take steps to destroy or de-identify information that we no longer require.

 6. Our server security policy is designed to protect the servers from unauthorised access, data breaches, and other security threats. Our practice uses the following security measures to ensure the personal information which it holds is secured:

* Antivirus software is installed on all servers and updated regularly.
* Firewalls are configured to block unauthorised traffic.
* Servers are placed on their own subnet.
* Access to servers is restricted to authorised users.
* Physical access to the servers are limited, with servers located in a secure room
* Servers are patched regularly to fix security vulnerabilities.
* Backups are created regularly every hour onsite with daily offsite backups.

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. You can lodge this request either via email (**practicemanager@drferraris.com.au**) or telephone. Our practice will acknowledge your request within three (3) business days. We can post the requested information to your postal address, or we can email the information to you if you request it. If we are required to process a request for your records, we may charge for our reasonable costs incurred in complying with your request.
* 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 (**practicemanager@drferraris.com.au).** There is no fee charged for making corrections to your personal information.

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 (including any breach of the APPs or any registered binding APP code) you may have in writing.

Complaints should be addressed to:

Name and Position: **Practice Manager**

Address: Lindfield Family Medicine, Suite 26/12 Tryon Road, Lindfield NSW 2070

Email: practicemanager@drferraris.com.au

 We will respond with acknowledgement of your complaint within three (3-5) business days

 and provide a response within thirty (30) business days.

* 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.

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| Document name | Date of Review  |  | Next Review |
| Privacy Policy | March 2024 | Server 11/ Data/ Practice Management / Policy/ Privacy Policy March 24  | March 2026 |