

# **Galston Medical Centre- Privacy Policy**

## **Introduction**

We are committed to protecting the privacy of patient information and to handling your personal information in a responsible manner in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012, the Australian Privacy Principles and relevant State and Territory privacy legislation (referred to as privacy legislation). From February 2018, further amendments to the Privacy Act requires us to report eligible data breaches that are likely to cause serious harm.

This Privacy Policy explains how we collect, use and disclose your personal information, how you may access that information and how you may seek the correction of any information. It also explains how you may make a complaint about a breach of the privacy legislation.

This Privacy Policy is current as of **20<sup>th</sup> February 2018**.

From time to time we may make changes to our policy, processes and systems in relation to how we handle your personal information. We will update this Privacy Policy to reflect any changes. Those changes will be available to you at any time in the practice. In addition to this policy we have a specific policy in relation to the My Health Record.

All staff are trained in the application of this Policy.

## **Collection**

We collect information that is necessary and relevant to provide you with medical care and treatment, and manage our medical practice. This information may include your name, address, date of birth, gender, country of birth, health information, family history, Medicare details and contact details including next of kin and emergency contact.

This information may be stored on our computer system and/or in hand written medical records.

Wherever practicable we will only collect information from you personally. However, we may also need to collect information from other sources such as treating specialists, radiologists, pathologists, hospitals, our After Hours service and other health care providers.

We collect information in various ways, such as over the phone or in writing, or in person in our practice rooms. This information may be collected by medical and non-medical staff.

In emergency situations we may also need to collect information from your relatives or friends. We may be required by law to retain medical records for certain periods of time depending on your age at the time we provide services.

## **Use and Disclosure**

We will treat your personal information as strictly private and confidential. We will only use or disclose it for purposes directly related to your care and treatment, or in ways that you would reasonably expect that we may use it for your ongoing care and treatment. For example, the disclosure of blood test results to your specialist or requests for x-rays.

If third parties such as insurers request your information we will never send your information without a current signed release from you to do so.

There are however circumstances where we may be permitted or required by law to disclose your personal information to third parties. For example, to Medicare, police, insurers, solicitors, government regulatory bodies, tribunals, courts of law, hospitals, or debt collection agents.

We may also from time provide de-identified statistical data to third parties for research purposes.

### **Data Quality and Security**

We will take reasonable steps to ensure that your personal information is accurate, complete, up to date and relevant. For this purpose our staff may ask you to confirm that your contact details are correct when you attend a consultation.

We request that you let us know if any of the information we hold about you is incorrect or out of date.

Personal information that we hold is protected by:

- Securing our premises
- Placing password and varying access levels on databases to limit access and protect electronic information from unauthorised interference, access, modification and disclosure;
- Storing paper files in an area not accessible to unauthorised personnel

### **Corrections**

If you believe that the information we have about you is not accurate, complete or up-to-date, we ask that you discuss with your doctor or contact us in writing (see details below)

#### ***Practice Manager***

#### ***Galston Medical Centre***

***31 Arcadia Road, Galston, NSW 2159***

### **Access**

You are entitled to request access to your medical records. We request that you put your request in writing as per address above and we will respond to it within a reasonable time. There may be a fee for the administrative costs of retrieving and providing you with copies of your medical records.

We may deny access to your records in certain circumstances permitted by law, for example, if disclosure may cause a serious threat to yours or someone else's health or safety.

We will always tell you why access is denied and the options you have to respond to our decision.

### **Complaints**

If you have a complaint about the privacy of your personal information, we request that you contact us in writing. Upon receipt of a complaint we will consider the details and attempt to resolve it in accordance with our complaints handling procedures.

If you are dissatisfied with our handling of a complaint or the outcome you may make an application to the Australian Information Commissioner or the Privacy Commissioner in your State or Territory.

To download forms or for more information visit ***[www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au)***