



Patient Information Privacy Statement

Use and Confidentiality of your Health Information Fact Sheet

Your privacy and confidentiality will be fully respected.

This fact sheet sets out why we collect your information & how that information will be used.

PURPOSE

This document outlines the practice policy related to Privacy, in line with the Privacy Act 2020. This promotes and protects the privacy of individual personal information and the Health Information Privacy Code, which specifically relates to the management of health information. This policy has also been designed to ensure that you can trust how and where your information is being stored, how it is being used, and steps that are being taken to ensure your privacy is protected.

ADDITIONAL USE OF INFORMATION

We collect your health information to provide a record of care. This helps you receive quality treatment and care when you need it. We also collect your health information to help:

- keep you and your Whanau safe
- improve government services
- carry out authorised research
- prepare and publish statistics
- Refer you to another treatment provider
- plan and fund health services
- train healthcare professionals

CONFIDENTIALITY, INFORMATION SHARING & ACCURACY

Your privacy and the confidentiality of your information is very important to us. All staff members at the practice have understood and signed a confidentiality agreement or contract of service. The obligations of this clause extend after the agreement or contract has ended. Further information regarding information sharing and confidentiality is outlined below:

- Your health practitioner will record relevant information from your consultation in your notes.
- When you enrol your health information will be shared with others involved in your healthcare and with other agencies with your consent, or if authorised by law.

Your health information may also be shared with other government agencies but only when permitted under the Privacy Act. It may also be shared if authorised by law.

- You have the right to know where your information is kept, who has access rights, and, if the system has audit log capability, who has viewed or updated your information.
- Your information will be kept securely to prevent unauthorised access.

- We are required to keep your information accurate, up-to-date, and relevant for your treatment and care

RIGHT TO ACCESS AND CORRECT

Your health information will be stored securely to ensure that unauthorised individuals cannot access or use this information. To achieve anonymity, we can assign numbers or codes, such as NHI or chart numbers, and will use this regularly in replace of identifying factors.

You have the right to access and correct your health information.

- You have the right to see and request a copy of your health information.
- You can ask for health information about you to be corrected. Practice staff should provide you with reasonable assistance. If your healthcare provider chooses not to change that information, you can have this noted on your file.
- Patient portals allow you to book on-line, request repeat prescriptions and view some of your health records. We offer a patient portal for our patients, so please contact reception if you are interested in registering for this.

If we need to send patients' health information to another person or agency, we must make sure that the information is sent securely and confidentiality. We ensure that we are especially careful when sending patient information electronically, such as by email, given the security risks involved. Patient information will only be sent by email once we have confirmed that the email address is correct, that the patient is the only individual who has access to the email address, and once the patient has been notified the risks of sending information through email.

See the resources available on the Medical Council website regarding our use of internet and electronic communication for further information.

USE OF YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION

Our practice is legally required to hold a patients' health information for a minimum of 10 years from the date they were last treated at the practice. Information may be kept for longer if the information is needed for the purposes of treating the patient. When medical information is no longer required, this information we be confidentially destroyed or returned to the patient.

Below are some examples of how your health information is used.

- Your practice is contracted to Western Bay of Plenty Primary Health Organisation (PHO). the WBOPPHO may use your information for clinical and administrative purposes including obtaining subsidised funding for you. Your information is anonymised if used in this circumstance.
- Your District Health Board BOPDHB uses your information to provide you treatment and care, and to improve the quality of its services.

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- A clinical audit may be conducted by a qualified health practitioner to review the quality of services provided to you. They may also view health records if the audit involves checking on health matters, but only according to the terms and conditions of Section 22G of the Health Act or any subsequent applicable Act.

- When you choose to register in a national screening health programme, relevant information may be shared with other health agencies.
- The Ministry of Health uses your demographic information to assign a unique number to you on the National Health Index (NHI). This NHI number will help identify you when you use health services.
- The Ministry of Health holds health information to measure how well health services are delivered and to plan and fund future health services. Auditors may occasionally conduct financial audits of your health practitioner. The auditors may review your records and may contact you to check that you received those services.
- Notification of births and deaths to the Births, Deaths and Marriages register may be performed electronically to streamline a person's interactions with government.

CHARGING FOR HEALTH INFORMATION

Under section 66 of the Privacy Act in relation to health information privacy requests, a health agency that is not a public sector health agency must not require payment, by or on behalf of any individual who wishes to make a request unless:

- Where, on a particular day, that agency has made health information available to that individual in response to a request, for making the same or substantially the same information in accordance with any subsequent request within the period of 12 months after that day; or
- For providing a copy of an x-ray, a video recording, an MRI scan photograph, a PET scan photograph, or a CT scan photograph.

Where an agency intends to make a charge under this clause and the amount of the charge is likely to exceed \$30, the agency must provide the individual with an estimate of charge before dealing with the request.

RESEARCH

Your health information may be used in research approved by an ethics committee or when it has had identifying details removed.

- Research which may directly or indirectly identify you can only be published if the researcher has previously obtained your consent and the study has received ethics approval.
- Under the law, you are not required to give consent to the use of your health information if it's for unpublished research or statistical purposes, or if it's published in a way that doesn't identify you.

CONSENT OPTIONS

If you do not agree to have any of your information collected, the only option is to register with a practice but not enrol. This means you would not qualify for funding services and a reduced cost of GP visits.

VISITING ANOTHER PRACTICE

If you visit another practice which is not your regular practice, you will be asked for permission to share information from the visit with your regular practice. If you have a High User Health Card or Community Services Card and you visit another practice which is not your regular practice, they can make a claim for a subsidy, and the practice you are enrolled with will be informed of the date of that visit. The name of the practice you visited and the reason(s) for the visit will not be disclosed unless you give consent.

COMPLAINTS

It's OK to complain if you're not happy with the way your health information is collected or used.

Talk to your healthcare provider in the first instance. If you are still unhappy with the response you can call the Office of the Privacy Commissioner toll-free on 0800 803 909, as they can investigate this further.

For further information:

Visit www.legislation.govt.nz to access the Health Act 1956, Official Information Act 1982, Privacy Act 2020

The Health Information Privacy Code 2020 is available at www.privacy.org.nz.

You can also use the Privacy Commissioner's Ask Us tool for privacy queries.

A copy of the Health and Disability Committee's Standard Operating procedures can be found at <http://ethics.health.govt.nz/operating-procedures>

Further detail in regard to the matters discussed in this Fact Sheet can be found on the Ministry of Health website at <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/digital-health/digital-health-sector-architecture-standards-and-governance/health-information-standards-0/standards-development/personal-health-information-standards>