

## **Introduction**

We are committed to protecting the privacy of patient information and to handling your personal information in a manner in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012, the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs), National Data Breach Scheme and relevant State and Territory privacy legislation (referred to as privacy legislation).

### **This Privacy Policy explains:**

- ☞ The kinds of information we collect and hold
- ☞ How we collect, use and disclose your personal information
- ☞ How you may access that information and seek the correction of that information
- ☞ How you may make a complaint about a privacy breach and how we deal with such a complaint
- ☞ Our policy on Overseas Transfer of Data

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 on our website and in the practice.

## **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, contact details including email address
- ☞ Medicare/DVA and other government identifiers, health fund information
- ☞ Health information, test results, medical reports, family history
- ☞ Appointment and billing/payment details

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

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

We collect information in various ways, such as over the phone or in writing, in person in our rooms or over the internet such as through transactions with specialist rooms or via our patient interactive software. 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.

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

We may disclose information about you to outside contractors to carry out activities on our behalf, such as an IT service provider, solicitor or debt collection agent. We impose security and confidentiality requirements on how they handle your personal information. Outside contractors are required not to use information about you for any purpose except for those activities we have asked them to perform. We may also from time to time provide statistical data to third parties for research purposes.

## Data Quality and Security

Our staff are trained to respect and protect your privacy. We take reasonable steps to ensure that your personal information is up to date and relevant and we protect the information held from misuse, loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. For this purpose, our staff may ask you to confirm your details are correct when we have contact with you and we request that you let us know if any of the information we hold about you is incorrect or out of date.

Information that we hold is protected by:

- ☞ placing passwords and varying access levels on databases to limit access and protect electronic information from unauthorised interference, access, modification and disclosure;
- ☞ minimising risk of cyber-attack with regularly reviewed multilayered protection systems for incoming emails and internet traffic;
- ☞ holding your information on secure Australian-based cloud storage;
- ☞ securing our premises and;
- ☞ providing locked cabinets and safe for the storage of physical records.

## Corrections

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

## Access

You are entitled to request access to your medical records. We request that you put your request in writing 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 medical records in certain circumstances permitted by law, for example if disclosure may cause a serious threat to your health or safety or that of another person. 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:

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner  
PO Box 5218 Sydney NSW 2001  
1300 363 992  
[enquiries@oaic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@oaic.gov.au)

## Overseas Transfer of Data

We will not transfer your personal information to an overseas recipient unless we have your consent or we are required to do so by law.

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed from to time to take account of new laws, technology, operational changes and other relevant developments to ensure it is in accordance with any externally imposed or internal changes that may occur. Updates will be published on the practice website.

## Contact

Please direct any queries, complaints or requests for access to medical records to:

Fiona Duthie

Practice Manager

Geelong Anaesthetic Group

Ph: 03 5222 3500

Fax: 03 5222 4044

Email: [gagadmin@gag.com.au](mailto:gagadmin@gag.com.au)