



## PRACTICE PRIVACY STATEMENT

**This statement sets out the Albert St & Harrington Medical Centre's policies relating to the collection and use of personal information. Personal information is information about you which identifies you.**

### **Your personal information is important to us**

The Practice recognises that your privacy is very important to you and that you have a right to control your personal information. We know that providing personal information is an act of trust and we take that seriously. Unless you give us explicit consent to act otherwise, the following policy will govern how the Practice handles your personal information and safeguards your privacy. The Practice is committed to protecting your personal information and giving you choice in who can use your personal information and how it can be used. We believe that our privacy policy not only complies with relevant laws but also represents best practice.

### **Collecting personal information about you**

If you are a patient, we collect personal information about you in order to provide you with the full benefits of health care. We collect information from you directly and also from time to time thereafter if you provide us with additional information. Once you are a patient, we maintain a health care record for you and a medical history with the Practice.

Personal information is collected in a private setting and patient records are kept inaccessible to the public. Information is only released to third parties after a signed consent form. Even so disclosure is limited to that which is authorised or required.

All research information collected by the practice is done only when consent is given by the patient, and de-identified.

Use of patient information for quality assurance and professional development is de-identified.

Using and disclosing your personal information

### **The Practice will not use or disclose any information about you without your consent unless:**

- Required by law.
- We believe it necessary to provide you with a service that you have requested.
- To implement our terms of use.
- To protect the rights or property of the Practice, any Practice user, or any member of the public.
- To lessen a serious threat to a person's health or safety.
- In order to provide some services to patients, the Practice may be required to provide Patients' contact details to third party suppliers of services. The Practice provides the opportunity for you to opt-out of such third party arrangements.

If any Patient does not want their contact details passed on to third parties for the purposes of health care, please contact our Albert St Medical Centre on 02 6552 5533.

Any medical students attending the practice has limited or no access to personal records, only with permission of patient, whilst in attendance.

When a patient transfers from this practice to another, a signed release of patient information request is required. A Health summary, a copy of recent progress notes and copies of recent results or specialist letters are then sent to the requesting practitioner. At times the continuing doctor is phoned up as well.

Confidentiality is maintained at all times when medical information is transferred to and from this practice.

## **Storage and security of your personal information**

The Practice will endeavour to take all reasonable steps to keep secure any personal information which we hold about you, and to keep this information accurate and up to date. Your information is stored on secure servers or is protected in controlled facilities.

In addition, our employees and the contractors who provide services related to our information systems are obliged to respect the confidentiality of any personal information held by the Practice. However, the Practice will not be held responsible for events arising from unauthorised access to your personal information.

You can access the information we keep about you

If you wish to know what information we hold about you, please contact the Albert St Medical Centre on 02 6552 5533. We will respond to your request within 30 days.

## **What to do if you have a problem or question**

If the Practice becomes aware of any ongoing concerns or problems with our personal health records on our system, we will take these issues seriously and work to address these concerns. If you have any further queries relating to our privacy policy, or you have a problem or complaint, please contact our Practice Manager on 02 6552 5533.

This practice has a process whereby complaints can formally be made to any member of staff or the Doctor on duty. Alternatively the NSW Health Care Complaints Commission: Locked Bag 18; Strawberry Hills NSW 2012: (Phone: 1800 043 159) or else the Aged Care Complaints Resolution Scheme (Phone 1800 550 552).

## **Management of information no longer required**

This practice has the following in place for the destruction of patient information no longer required, by shredding; we use a commercial shredder (Mid Coast Document Services). We retain all information for 7 years or until the patient reaches the age of 25 years (whichever is longer). For electronic information - it is made 'inactive', and no longer visible to current users.

## **Future changes**

From time to time, our policies will be reviewed and may be revised. The Practice reserves the right to change its privacy policy at any time and notify you by posting an updated version of the policy on our Notice Boards at each of our Practice's.

