

# Privacy Policy

## INTRODUCTION

Fourth Avenue ENT Clinic is committed to protecting the privacy of our patients within our practice.

## PATIENT CONSENT

The practice will only interpret and apply a patient's consent for the primary purpose for which it was provided. The Practice staff must seek additional consent from the patient if the personal information collected may be used for any other purpose.

## COLLECTION, USE AND DISCLOSURE

We collect information that is necessary and relevant to provide you with medical care, treatment, and manage our medical practice. Collected personal information will include patient's

- Names, addresses and contact details
- Medicare number for identification and claiming purposes
- Healthcare identifiers
- Medical information including medical history, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors.

A patient's personal information may be held at the practice in various forms

- As paper records
- As electronic records
- As visuals ie xrays, CT scans, MRIs, videos & photos
- As audio recordings

The practice's procedures for collecting personal information is set out below:

- Practice staff collect patient's personal and demographic information via registration when patients present to the clinic at their initial visit. Patients are encouraged to pay attention to the registration form that they complete as a new patient.
- During the course of providing medical services the practice's healthcare practitioners will consequently collect further personal information.
- Personal information may also be collected from the patient's guardian or responsible person (where practicable and necessary) or from other involved healthcare specialists.

The practice holds all personal information securely, whether in electronic format, in protected information systems or in hard copy in a secured environment.

Personal information collected by Fourth Avenue ENT Clinic may be used or disclosed as required by law to third parties. For example Medicare, Police, insurers, solicitors, government regulatory bodies, tribunals, courts of law, hospitals, or debt collection agents. We may also from time to time provide statistical data to third parties for research purposes. Some disclosure may occur to third parties engaged by or for the practice for the Practice for business purposes such as for the provision of information technology or solicitor These third parties are required to comply with this policy

The practice will not disclose personal information to any third party other than in the course of providing medical services, without full disclosure to the patient or the recipient, the reason for the information transfer and full consent from the patient.

The Practice will not disclose personal information to anyone outside Australia without need and without patient consent.

The Practice will not use any personal information in relation to direct marketing to a patient without that patient's express consent.

The practice evaluates all unsolicited information it receives to decide if it should be kept, acted upon or destroyed.

Fourth Avenue ENT Clinic will employ all reasonable endeavours to ensure that a patient's personal information is not disclosed without their prior consent.

## **6. DATA QUALITY**

Patient information collected and retained in our records for the purpose of providing quality health care will be complete, accurate, and up to date at the time of collection.

## **7. DATA SECURITY**

All due care will be taken to ensure the protection of patient privacy during the transfer, storage and use of personal health information.

Retention of medical records is for a minimum of 7 years from the date of last entry into the patient record unless the patient is a child in which case the record must be kept until the patient attains the age of 25 years of age.

## **8. ACCESS TO PATIENT INFORMATION AND CORRECTION**

The following will apply with regard to accessing personal and private medical information by an individual:

- An individual has the right to request access their own personal information and request a copy or part of the whole record;
- Individuals have the right to obtain their personal information in accordance with the Federal Privacy Act from 20 December 2001 onwards. Requests must be made in writing and an acknowledgement letter will be sent to the patient within 14 days confirming the request and detailing whether the request can be complied with and an indication of any costs associated with providing the information. Time spent and photocopying costs when processing a request can be passed on to the requesting patient. Information can be expected to be provided within 30 days.
- Requests for information prior to 20 December 2001 will be considered by the practice
- Whilst the individual is not required to give a reason for obtaining the information, a patient may be asked to clarify the scope of the request;
- In some instances the request to obtain information may be denied, in these instances the patient will be advised;
- The material over which a Doctor has copyright might be subject to conditions that

prevent or restrict further copying or publication without the Doctors permission;

- The practice will take reasonable steps to correct personal information where it is satisfied they are not accurate or up to date. From time to time the practice will ask patients to verify the personal information held by the practice is correct and up to date.
- Patients may also request the Practice corrects or updates their information and patients should must such requests in writing.
- Upon request by the patient, the information held by this clinic will be made available to another health provider.

## **9. PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND CHILDREN**

To protect the rights of a child's privacy, access to a child's medical information may at times be restricted for parents and guardians. Release of information may be referred back to the treating Doctor where there professional judgement and the law will be applied.

## **10. COMPLAINTS**

The Practice takes complaints and concerns about the privacy of patient's personal information seriously. 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 complaint resolution 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.

All employees of Fourth Avenue ENT Clinic are required to observe the obligations of confidentiality in the course of their employment and are required to sign Confidentiality Agreements.

In the instance where you are dissatisfied with the level of service provided within the clinic we encourage you to discuss any concerns relating to the privacy of your information with the Practice Manager or your Doctor.

If the complaint has not been resolved to your level of satisfaction all complaints should be directed to:

The Federal Privacy Commissioner

Level 8 Piccadilly Tower

133 Castlereagh Street

Sydney NSW 2000

**Privacy Hotline:** 1300 363 992

## **UPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Australian Privacy Principle <https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/australian-privacy-principles/read-the-australian-privacy-principles/>

More information about Freedom of Information <https://www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/your-foi-rights/what-is-freedom-of-information/>