

Bauhinia Health privacy & confidentiality policy

Current as of: 03/10/2024

Introduction

This privacy policy is to provide information to you, our patient, on how your personal information (which includes your health information) is collected and used within our practice, and the circumstances in which we may share it with third parties.

Why and when your consent is necessary.

When you register as a patient of our practice, you provide consent for our GPs and practice staff to access and use your personal information so they can provide you with the best possible healthcare. Only staff who need to see your personal information will have access to it. If we need to use your information for anything else, we will seek additional consent from you to do this.

Why do we collect, use, hold and share your personal information?

Our practice will need to collect your personal information to provide healthcare services to you. Our main purpose for collecting, using, holding and sharing your personal information is to manage your health. We also use it for directly related business activities, such as financial claims and payments, practice audits and accreditation, and business processes (e.g., staff training).

What personal information do we collect?

The information we will collect about you includes your:

- names, date of birth, addresses, contact details.
- medical information including medical history, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors.
- Medicare number (where available) for identification and claiming purposes.
- healthcare identifiers
- health fund details.

Dealing with us anonymously

You have the right to deal with us anonymously or under a pseudonym unless it is impracticable for us to do so or unless we are required or authorised by law to only deal with identified individuals.

How do we collect your personal information?

Our practice may collect your personal information in several different ways.

1. When you make your first appointment our practice staff will collect your personal and demographic information via your registration.
2. During the provision of medical services, we may collect further personal information. We collect information through eScripts, pathology eReferrals, and through your Shared Health Summary from My Health Record,
3. We may also collect your personal information when you visit our website, send us an email or SMS, telephone us, make an online appointment or communicate with us using social media. Your consent to this is obtained when your first sign up as a new patient and may be withdrawn at anytime in

writing.

- We use a third party telephone app to facilitate booking appointments, booking and conducting telehealth appointments and making payments. The third party app does NOT store any data, including credit card details, but does have limited access to our patient management system to correlate information provided by you through the app to ensure your privacy. This app is also the vehicle for video telehealth but there is no recording of either the video or audio component of the telehealth appointment. You will be asked to provide your consent when using the app for the first time.
 - Some of our health professionals may use an AI program to record and generate consultation notes from your consultation. All voice recordings and transcriptions are deleted from the AI servers within 48 hours. The AI servers are located in Australia and are highly protected. You will be asked for your consent prior to this program being used. Once given, it is assumed that this consent is permanent until withdrawn by you.
 - Our patient management software is designed to generate semi-automated referrals to other Health Professionals. Your Doctor has choices to add or remove specific health information to ensure only information necessary is transmitted to the referred Health Professionals. Your referral is securely transmitted through the practice management software. You can request that parts of your health information are not transmitted to the referred health professional and should be discussed with your Doctor at the time of the referral.
 - Pathology results mostly are sent and stored directly into your patient record. Imaging results are generally linked to an external viewer and directly linked to your patient record. Other items, such as specialist letters, discharge summaries etc are received as pdfs via efax or email and are digitally uploaded into your patient record. All emails faxes and pdfs are then deleted.
 - Paper records are scanned and uploaded to your patient record and the paper records destroyed after one month.
4. In some circumstances personal information may also be collected from other sources. Often this is because it is not practical or reasonable to collect it from you directly. This may include information from:
- your guardian or responsible person
other involved healthcare providers, such as specialists, allied health professionals, hospitals, community health services and pathology and diagnostic imaging services
 - your health fund, Medicare, or the Department of Veterans' Affairs (as necessary).

When why and with whom do we share your personal information?

We sometimes share your personal information:

- with third parties who work with our practice for business purposes, such as accreditation agencies or information technology providers – these third parties are required to comply with APPs and this policy.
- with other healthcare providers (including allied health and telehealth doctors)
- when it is required or authorised by law (e.g. court subpoenas)
- when it is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to a patient's life, health or safety or public health or safety, or it is impractical to obtain the patient's consent.
- to assist in locating a missing person
- to establish, exercise or defend an equitable claim.
- for the purpose of confidential dispute resolution process
- when there is a statutory requirement to share certain personal information (eg some diseases require mandatory)



- during the course of providing medical services, through eTP (eScripts), pathology eReferrals, and uploading of Shared Health Summary into My Health Record.

Only people who need to access your information will be able to do so. Other than while providing medical services or as otherwise described in this policy, our practice will not share personal information with any third party without your consent.

The only time we share your personal information with anyone outside Australia is when making a telephone booking and only your personal and demographic information is collected or shared to enable an appointment to be booked. None of your information is stored overseas, nor can it be downloaded nor printed overseas, and access is strictly controlled by the practice manager.

Our practice will not use your personal information for marketing any of our goods or services directly to you without your express consent. If you do consent, you may opt out of direct marketing at any time by notifying our practice in writing.

Our practice may use your personal information to improve the quality of the services we offer to our patients through research and analysis of our patient data.

We provide **de-identified** data to other organisations such as the NT Primary Health Network, to improve population health outcomes and to improve the quality of our service provision. The information is secured in a national online database, patients cannot be identified as there is no link to the data supplied, and the information is stored within Australia. You can let our reception staff know if you do not want your information included.

How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information is electronically stored, with some initial paper-based patient consent forms which are stored securely and backed up electronically. Xray's, CT scans, and MRIs are sourced and stored electronically in your patient record, images captured in the clinic are uploaded into your patient record and the image on the camera destroyed.

Our practice stores all personal information securely in an electronic format in highly protected information systems secured "in the cloud" in Darwin and Perth. Your records can only be accessed by approved health practitioners and approved staff, and can only be accessed through password protected servers and through user/password protected logons into patient management software. What authorities a health professional or staff person has, is determined and controlled by the Practice Manager and through the health professional's status with Services Australia eg. Only Doctors can issue scripts

How can you access and correct your personal information at our practice?

You have the right to request access to, and correction of, your personal information.

Our practice acknowledges patients may request access to their medical records. We require you to put this request in writing and our practice will respond within a reasonable time. Bauhinia Health considers 30 days reasonable. Patients will be charged a fee of \$30.00 + GST for transfer of medical records to other practices based outside of Katherine.

Our practice will take reasonable steps to correct your personal information where the information is not accurate or up to date. From time to time, we will ask you to verify that your personal information held by our practice is correct and current. You may also request that we correct or update your information, and you should make such requests in writing to admin@bauhinia.com.au.



How can you lodge a privacy-related complaint, and how will the complaint be handled at our practice?

We take complaints and concerns regarding privacy seriously. You should express any privacy concerns you may have in writing. We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with our resolution procedure. A complaint form is available upon request and provides all information required to lodge your complaint and/or feedback. Our email for complaints is admin@bauhinia.com.au or can be mailed to us at Bauhinia Health, PO Box 63, Katherine NT 0851. You may expect a response to your complaint within 30 days of lodging your complaint.

You may also contact the OAIC. Generally, the OAIC will require you to give them time to respond before they will investigate. For further information visit www.oaic.gov.au or call the OAIC on 1300 363 992. Alternatively, you can also contact the Northern Territory Health Care Complaints Commission on 1800 004 474.

Policy review statement

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur. Updated policies will be displayed in the clinic waiting area.

Version control

| Version No. | Date | Reason for update |
|-------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| 1.0 | 15 June 2021 | Original Document |
| 2.0 | 3 October 2024 | Revised against updated standard |

Approval

| Name | Title | Signature | Date |
|---------------|-------|-----------|------|
| Anjali Palmer | PM | | |