

Our commitment to privacy

Our practice is committed to safeguarding the personal information of patients and staff in line with our obligations under Commonwealth legislation as well as guidelines set by industry regulatory bodies such as the Australian Dental Board.¹

What information do we collect about patients and why?

Administrative and patient identification data

Our practice collects data for administrative and patient identification purposes, including *name, phone number, contact address/billing address, facial recognition photo, private health care fund and number, Medicare number* (if required for government-sponsored programs), *financial records of accounts and payments* (kept for five years, as required by the Australian Taxation Office), *insurance claims records, work related injuries* (records kept for five years as required under WHS legislation), *complaints*.

Dental records

We keep detailed dental records including *drug sensitivities, diagnostic tests, examination history, treatment, advice, referrals, communications with laboratories and other practitioners, x-rays, photos etc.* to help us provide appropriate ongoing care. We may obtain this information from other practitioners or we may share this information with other practitioners with your consent as part of this ongoing care. Personal details are verified regularly and treatment records are updated at every consultation. We may add a note to health records retrospectively but we do not change records. For a detailed list of documentation please ask for a copy of **Appendix 1**.

Who else may see the information?

We may use patient information to discuss treatment with other practitioners. We may use it in a de-identified form for academic purposes, or with insurance officers or lawyers where the treatment relates to an Insurance claim or complaint.

Health Identifiers

The practice will not adopt, use or disclose an identifier assigned by any government agency except health care identifiers for purposes permitted under the *Healthcare Identifiers Act (2010) (Cwth)*.

Access and correction

Patients and staff may request access to their information or make changes to their information at any time except where we consider there is a sound reason under the Privacy Act or other legislation. We may charge to recover costs in providing access to electronic or paper records. We aim to use accurate, current and complete information and we will make reasonable attempts to correct inaccurate information or dispose of any unsolicited information or information no longer required.

Anonymity

You may provide a pseudonym for emergency treatment if it is paid in full at the time of treatment. However, anonymous treatment is not practical for ongoing care or if other practitioners or diagnostic records are required, or for Medicare funded/insurance-funded services. We may also refuse to provide anonymous treatment if it is impractical due to our legal requirements to report child abuse or to manage substance abuse.

How safe is your information?

Our practice takes all reasonable steps to protect your personal information from misuse, interference and loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. For our privacy policy in relation to IT and web site privacy, please ask for a copy of **Appendix 2**.

Complaints

If you have a complaint about the way in which your information is handled contact the Practice Privacy Officer: Dr Karl Scarpin, (08) 8297 4777. Contact the Privacy Commissioner if you are not satisfied with the response after 30 (thirty) days at <http://oaic.gov.au/privacy/making-a-privacy-complaint>.

Please sign to agree to our privacy policy and to receive SMS messages and/or emails for appointment reminders and to receive information about the practice.

Name: **Signature:** **Date:** / /

¹ The State Government has Information Privacy Principles, administered by the Privacy Committee, which apply to all government agencies but not to private health practices. We also observe the Australian Health Practitioner Regulatory Agency (AHPRA's) Social Media Policy (March 2014).