

The Lindisfarne Clinic Privacy Policy

Current as of: February 2025

Introduction

This privacy policy provides information on how your personal information (including health information) is collected, used, and shared within our practice. It outlines how we handle your information, the measures we take to protect it, and when and with whom we may share it.

What is a Patient Health Record?

A patient health record is a detailed document that tracks your interactions, consultations, and encounters with our healthcare practice. It is managed by general practitioners and other practice personnel and is critical for providing quality healthcare.

Why and When Your Consent is Necessary

By registering as a patient with our practice, you consent to our GPs and practice staff accessing and using your personal information to provide the best possible healthcare. Only staff members who need access to your information for treatment will be permitted to view it. If your information is needed for any other purpose, we will request your additional consent.

Why Do We Collect, Use, Hold, and Share Your Personal Information?

Our practice collects, uses, and holds your personal information primarily to provide healthcare services, manage your health, and facilitate medical treatment. Additionally, we may use it for administrative purposes such as financial claims, practice audits, and staff training.

What Personal Information Do We Collect?

We collect the following information:

- Personal details: Name, date of birth, contact details, and address.
- Medical history: Including medical conditions, medications, allergies, immunisations, social and family history, and risk factors.
- Government identifiers: Medicare number (for identification and claiming purposes).
- Health fund details (if applicable).
- Healthcare identifiers.
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Dealing with Us Anonymously

You have the right to deal with us anonymously or under a pseudonym unless it is impractical or unless we are required by law to deal with identified individuals. Please let us know if you would prefer this option.

How Do We Collect Your Personal Information?

We collect personal information in several ways:

1. During your first appointment, where we collect personal and demographic details.
2. During consultations and treatments, additional medical information is gathered.
3. In certain circumstances, we may obtain information from third parties, such as:
 - Your guardian or responsible person.
 - Other healthcare providers, including specialists, allied health professionals, and hospitals.
 - Health funds, Medicare, or the Department of Veterans' Affairs, if necessary.
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How Are Document Automation Technologies Used?

Our practice uses document automation technologies to generate electronic documents such as referrals to other healthcare providers. These documents contain only the relevant information required for your treatment. The automation system uses secure medical software [insert name of clinical software] to manage and process data.

All users of this software have unique credentials and passwords, granting access only to information relevant to their role within the practice. We adhere to Australian privacy legislation and the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) to protect your information. All data, both electronic and paper, is managed in accordance with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) guidance on privacy and managing health information.

Obtaining Informed Consent for Audio/Visual Recordings of Consultations

In our practice, we may, on occasion, record consultations through real-time audio/visual recordings, including telehealth consultations. We will always seek informed consent from you prior to any recording of a consultation, whether in person or via telehealth. If the consultation is recorded, we will explain the purpose of the recording, how it will be stored, and who will have access to it. You will have the option to decline consent for the recording, and we will respect your decision.

If we record telehealth or audiovisual consultations, we ensure that the recordings are securely stored and protected in compliance with the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs).

If we do not record telehealth or audiovisual consultations, please be assured that no such recordings are made. Our practice will clearly inform patients in this policy, and no recordings will take place unless explicit consent is obtained from you beforehand.

When, Why, and With Whom Do We Share Your Personal Information?

We may share your personal information in the following situations:

- With third parties who work with our practice, such as accreditation agencies or IT providers, in compliance with privacy requirements.
- When referring to other healthcare providers for the purpose of treatment.
- When required or authorised by law (e.g., court subpoenas).
- To prevent or lessen a serious threat to your health, safety, or public health.
- To assist in locating a missing person or for dispute resolution.
- For mandatory disease notifications as required by law.
- During the course of providing medical services, via platforms like My Health Record.

We will not share your personal information with anyone outside Australia unless permitted by law or with your consent.

Use of Personal Information for Marketing

We will not use your personal information for marketing our goods or services to you without your express consent. If you consent, you can opt out of marketing communications at any time by notifying us in writing.

Research and Data Use

We may use de-identified data from patient records to improve our healthcare services. This data will be securely stored within Australia, and patients cannot be identified. If you prefer that your data is not used in this way, please inform our reception staff.

How Do We Store and Protect Your Personal Information?

Your personal information is securely stored in your electronic patient file. We implement strict security measures, including routine password updates and regular oversight by an external IT company, to protect your data from unauthorised access.

How Can You Access and Correct Your Personal Information?

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

To access your information, please submit a written request via email or mail. We will respond within 30 days. You may also request that we correct or update any inaccurate or outdated information by contacting the Practice Manager at admin@thelindisfarneclinic.com.au.

How Can You Lodge a Privacy-Related Complaint, and How Will It Be Handled?

If you have privacy concerns, please submit your complaint in writing. We will aim to resolve it within 30 days.

You can also contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) or the Health Complaints Commissioner for further assistance.

OAIC Contact

Website: www.oaic.gov.au

Phone: 1300 363 992

Health Complaints Commissioner

GPO Box 960, Hobart, TAS 7001

Phone: 1800 001 170

Email: health.complaints@ombudsman.tas.gov.au

Policy Review Statement

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains up to date with applicable privacy laws.

Disclaimer

This privacy policy template is intended to provide general guidance and may not fully address all specific circumstances.

Always seek professional advice to ensure compliance with privacy laws. The RACGP disclaims liability for any reliance on this template.