

Privacy Policy

Rural Medical Clinic (“we”, “our” or “us”) respects your privacy. We are committed to the protection of personal privacy within the scope of applicable law. This Privacy Policy covers our treatment of personal information and sensitive information that we collect, use and disclose.

Personal information is information that identifies you directly or from which your identity can be reasonably ascertained.

Sensitive information is particular types of personal information. For example, information about racial or ethnic origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or practices, a criminal record and the like. Most relevantly for our practice, health information about you is sensitive information.

We may update this Privacy Policy from time to time. The most current version will be located on our website, and is also available by contacting our Privacy Officer by email or at the address detailed below.

By the use of our website, or by providing any personal or sensitive information to us, you consent to the collection, use and disclosure of your personal and sensitive information as set out in this Privacy Policy.

We are not responsible for the privacy practices of sites that are linked to our website via hyperlinks, banner advertising or otherwise. Please take care to check the privacy policies of the sites you visit before you provide your personal or sensitive information.

Types of personal and sensitive information collected

The information that we collect may include any or all of the following:

- name, address(es), telephone number(s), email address(es) and other contact details;
- date of birth;
- occupation;
- your referring health professional or other referrer;
- details about your Department of Veteran Affairs details or your workers compensation claim details;
- health information provided by your referring health professional or collected during a consultation with one of the doctors practising from our practice; and
- other personal or sensitive information required to provide our services.

From time to time, you may provide us, and we may collect from you, personal or sensitive information of a third party (for example, if you are assisting a child or an elderly person to seek treatment from one of the doctors). Where you provide such information of a third party, it is your responsibility to ensure that those persons are aware of this Privacy Policy, understand it and agree to accept it.

You do not have to provide us with any personal or sensitive information, however if you do not do so we may not be able to facilitate the provision of services or benefits to you.

How we collect personal information

Generally, we collect personal and sensitive information directly from you, such as when:

- you complete a New Patient Registration Form upon first attending the practice for a consultation;
- one of the doctors practising at the practice takes a history from you and observes your symptoms during a consultation;
- you call us on the telephone with such information or send us an email, fax, note, letter or the like; or
- a parent, guardian or carer provides such information to us on your behalf.

We also collect personal and sensitive information about you when a health professional sends us a referral letter about your condition, as well as from x-rays, scans and the like.

If we collect personal or sensitive information about you from someone else in circumstances where you may not be aware that we have collected such information, where reasonably practicable we will notify you as soon as possible that the collection has occurred and the circumstances of that collection.

Why we collect, use and disclose personal information

We will use the personal and sensitive information we collect for the purpose disclosed at the time of collection, or otherwise as set out in this Privacy Policy. Primarily, we will use that information to facilitate the health professionals practising at the practice provide you with health care services during a consultation. We will not use your personal or sensitive information for any other purpose without first seeking your consent, or where authorised or required by law.

We will collect personal information for the following purposes:

- to establish and maintain your relationship with us;
- to facilitate provision of the services or products you are seeking at the practice;
- to facilitate payment for the services you receive, and to assist you to claim any applicable rebates for those services;
- to answer any inquiry you make; and
- to communicate with you about our services and events.

We may also disclose your personal and sensitive information to third parties who work closely with our business to provide, promote or improve the services or products you have requested or are interested in, such as:

- to health professionals and other advisers to whom a doctor refers you, or from whom you have been referred to a health professional in the practice;
- to manufacturers and suppliers of products that the health professionals in the practice recommend to you and assist you to obtain.

Direct marketing

From time to time, we may use and disclose your personal information to send direct marketing to you from:

- us; and
- third parties who provide services which are complementary to our services.

Your personal information will only be disclosed if it is necessary for us to engage a third party to assist us with such marketing efforts, which third party will have contractual obligations to us to keep your personal information confidential.

We will not use or disclose your sensitive information in any of our marketing activities.

The direct marketing may relate to:

- the products and services that can be accessed at the practice;
- the products and services of other parties, such as allied health practitioners; and
- new developments and events we believe may be of interest to you.

You may opt-out of receiving this direct marketing through the unsubscribe function that will be made available to you with each direct marketing communication. You may also call the practice to unsubscribe to those communications.

How we store and protect personal information

We mainly store personal and sensitive information in secure computer storage facilities located in Australia (and provided by a third party that has contractual obligations to us). As much as possible, we seek to collect and store the information gathered by the practice in electronic formats. It is still necessary, however, to have some paper-based files and other records at our practice. In so doing, we have taken numerous steps to protect your personal information from misuse, interference and loss, and unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.

Additionally, we take reasonable steps to destroy or permanently de-identify personal and sensitive information when we no longer need it.

Please note that internet is not a secure method of transmitting information. We cannot and do not accept responsibility for the security of information you send to or receive from us over the internet, or for any unauthorised access or use of that information.

We will not transfer your personal and sensitive information outside Australia.

How you can access your personal information

We will take reasonable steps to make sure that the personal and sensitive information we collect, use or disclose is accurate, complete and up to date. If your personal details change, such as your address or phone number, please contact the practice to update those details.

At your request, we will provide you, within a reasonable period after your request, with a copy of any personal and sensitive information that we hold about you, unless an exception under the Privacy Act 1988 applies. We may charge a fee for retrieving this information, in which case we will inform you of the fee and obtain your agreement to that fee before providing the information. We will require you to provide us with some proof of identity before we provide you with a copy of the personal or sensitive information we hold. If we believe that we are not able to provide you with access to personal or sensitive information, we will give you a notice of our reasons and advise you of the complaint mechanisms that exist under the Privacy Act 1988.

We will promptly acknowledge and investigate any complaint about the way we manage personal and sensitive information.

How to contact us or make a complaint

If you have any questions about this Privacy Policy, if you wish to update information we hold about you or if you wish to make a complaint about our collection, use or disclosure of your personal and sensitive information under this Privacy Policy, please contact:

The Privacy Officer
Rural Medical Clinic
PO Box 21
Manilla NSW 2346

Telephone: (02) 6766 8288
Email: practicemanager@ruralmedicalclinic.com.au

We will take reasonable steps to remedy any issues that you raise with us resulting from any failure to comply with our privacy obligations. You may communicate with us anonymously or using a pseudonym. We will not seek to match your pseudonym to other information we have collected from you. But we may need you to identify yourself to us at some stage to properly assist you.

More information about Australia's privacy laws and the Australian Privacy Principles is available from the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner at www.oaic.gov.au. You can contact that Office if we cannot resolve any privacy issue that you raise with us.