

Practice Privacy Policy

INTRODUCTION

Mt Martha Village Clinic is committed to ensuring the privacy of your personal information is respected and maintained at all times. We take our commitment as an ethical obligation and are bound by the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) in the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth) and any relevant Health Privacy Principles (HPPs) under Victorian Health Records Act (2001). You will find more information about APPs and HPPs by going to the Australian Information Commissioner's website www.oaic.gov.au.

This Privacy Policy outlines how we manage your personal information and how we collect, hold, use and disclose that information within our practice and to a third party.

We engage expert advice from IT company specifically to ensure your personal health record and information is stored securely and is safeguarded. You have the right to access your personal health information under the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2012 for which fees apply.

PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION

Mt Martha Village Clinic collects and holds personal information for the purpose of providing health services to you. Our main purpose for collecting, holding and sharing your information is to manage your health and be proactive in improving your health care. We also use it for directly related business activities such as financial claims and payments, practice audits and accreditation and business processes. Information is collected by Mt Martha Village Clinic with patient written consent or implied consent.

COLLECTION

What personal information do we collect and hold?

- 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 for claiming purposes
- Healthcare identifiers
- Health fund details

How do we collect your personal information?

- When you make your first appointment, our staff will collect your personal and demographic information via our patient registration. In addition, the patient registration form asks you for some medical information.
- During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information. We may collect information through electronic transfer of prescriptions and My Health Record.
- 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.
- Notes that are made during the course of your medical consultation
- Credit card information for billing purposes.

Whenever practicable we will collect this information from you personally. In some circumstances personal information may be collected from other sources such as your guardian or responsible person, other health service providers, hospitals, pathology and imaging diagnostic services, your health fund, Medicare and the Department of Veteran's Affairs.

Information is collected in a manner that ensures protection of privacy and confidentiality.

USE AND DISCLOSURE

No information will be released that identifies a patient to a third party not involved in the patient's care without the patient's written consent.

We sometimes share your personal information:

- With other healthcare providers directly involved in your health care
- With our practice administration staff for billing and other tasks necessary to run our practice. All staff have access appropriate to their job description, are trained in handling personal information in accordance with the practice privacy policy and have signed confidentiality agreements.
- With third parties who work with our practice for business purposes such as accreditation bodies or information technology providers. When we send you appointment reminders and clinical reminders via SMS, we engage a carrier in order to get the message to you.
- Some medical information is downloaded directly into your medical record ie pathology results and specialist correspondence. These are encrypted to ensure confidentiality.
- With My Health Record (unless you have opted out) and electronic transfer of prescriptions
- When we are legally compelled to do so to respond to subpoenas and in the instance of mandatory notification of a disease.

- There may be circumstances where the doctor will be obliged to release personal health information without their express consent such as in treating a serious threat to a patient's life, health and safety or it is impracticable to obtain a patient's consent.
- Your information may be used to send you reminders regarding your health care and management.
- To medical defence insurer or lawyer to defend a medical claim
- When you move to another medical practice, we will support continuity of care by preparing a relevant summary of your medical record. When we receive a form signed by you authorising transfer of medical information, we will post by registered mail this summary to your new GP. There is no fee for this service, unless you require more than is deemed necessary.
- De-identified information may be used for research & quality assurance activities and professional development to improve individual & community health. Our practice uses software POLAR that reports de-identified data to secure health services to improve planning initiatives in this area.

Please let our medical reception team know if you do not want your de-identified information to be included.

- We will occasionally inform you by sms to alert you to an important change in service or when the Government funded vaccines have arrived.

You may choose to opt out of this service at any time.

ANONYMITY

You have the right to deal with us anonymously, unless it is impracticable for us to do so or unless we are required or authorised by law to only deal with identified individuals. In this instance Medicare rebate will not be available.

DATA QUALITY AND SECURITY

Our staff may ask you to confirm that your contact details are current when you make an appointment and attend for consultation. Please inform us if any of the information we hold about you has changed. We will take reasonable steps to ensure that your personal information is accurate, complete, current and relevant.

Your personal information may be stored at our practice in various forms - ie as electronic and paper records, as visual (X-rays, CT scans, videos and photos). Our practice stores all personal information safely in a secured environment. The practice is monitored with alarm system. We employ the services of expert IT firm, specifically catered for the medical field to keep your electronic information secure with regular backups and restore, antivirus, firewall and intrusion detection. Any paper files are kept locked and away from public access. All staff use passwords and in certain circumstances - 2 step authentication and there are different levels of staff access depending on their role within the practice and confidentiality agreements are compulsory for all staff and contractors.

ACCESS

You may wish to directly access part of the full details of your health record. 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. A written request will be obtained prior to access and our medical reception team hold a proforma to assist you. Your request will go to the practice privacy officer and we will respond within 30 days. A fee will be charged for a printout of medical record is required, which will reflect the time taken to prepare the document, retrieval, copying and postage. There is no Medicare rebate or discount fee available for this service.

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 your personal information held by our practice is correct and up-to-date. You may also request that we correct or update your information, and you should make such requests in writing to The Privacy Officer, Mt Martha Village Clinic, 2 Langrigg Avenue, Mt Martha 3934.

COMPLAINTS

We take complaints and concerns regarding privacy seriously.

You should express any privacy concerns you may have in writing so we can investigate and attempt to resolve it in accordance with our resolution procedure. These can be submitted in writing to The Practice Manager, Mt Martha Village Clinic, 2 Langrigg Avenue, Mt Martha VIC 3934, or by emailing confidential@mmvc.com.au and we will respond to you within 30 days. If you are dissatisfied with our response, you may wish to lodge an application to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (AOIC) Tel: 1300 336 002 or by email foi@oaic.gov.au or the Office of Victorian Information Commissioner Tel: 1300 006 842 <https://ovic.vic.gov.au/privacy/for-the-public/privacy-complaints/> or Health Services Commissioner Level 26/570 Bourke Street, Melbourne VIC 3000, Tel: 1300 582 113 Fax: 03 9032 3111.

CONTACT

Please direct any queries, feedback, complaints or requests for medical records to:

The Privacy Officer/Practice Manager

Mt Martha Village Clinic

2 Langrigg Avenue

Mt Martha 3934

Tel: 03 5974 3500