



Managing patient health information

Responsible Officer:

General Manager

Applicable templates/forms:

New Patient Registration Form

Request for Personal Health Information

Purpose of Policy:

To ensure patients who receive care from the Practice are comfortable in entrusting their health information to the Practice. This policy provides information to patients as to how their personal information (which includes their health information) is collected and used within the Practice, and the circumstances in which we may disclose it to third parties.

Background

The Australian Privacy Principles (APP) provides a privacy protection framework that supports the rights and obligations of collecting, holding, using, accessing and correcting personal health information. The APP consist of 13 principle-based laws and applies equally to paper-based and digital environments. The APP complements the long-standing general practice obligation to manage personal information in a regulated, open and transparent manner.

This policy will guide the Pioneer Health team in meeting these legal obligations. It also details to patients how we use their personal information. The policy is available to patients on request.

Procedure

The Practice will:

- Provide a copy of this policy upon request
- Ensure staff comply with the APP and deal appropriately with inquiries or concerns
- Take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to implement practices, procedures and systems to ensure compliance with the APP and deal with inquiries or complaints
- Collect personal health information for the primary purpose of managing a patient's healthcare and for financial claims and payments

Team Responsibility:

Pioneer Health will take reasonable steps to ensure patients understand:

- What information has been and is being collected
- Why the information is being collected, and whether this is due to a legal requirement
- How the information will be used or disclosed
- Why and when their consent is necessary

- Pioneer Health's procedures for access and correction of information, and responding to complaints of information breaches, including by providing this policy.

Patient Consent

Pioneer Health will only interpret and apply patients consent for the primary purpose for which it was provided. This may include:

- For communicating relevant information with other treating doctors, specialists or allied health professionals.
- For follow up reminder / recall notices, (e.g. letters sent to you in the mail or by telephone call).
- For National / State registers (e.g. Immunisation data).
- For State / Territory reminder systems (e.g. cervical screening - pap smear reminders or familiar cancer registries).
- Accounting / Medicare / Health Insurance procedures.
- Quality Assurance activities such as accreditation.
- For disease notification as required by law (e.g. infectious diseases).
- For use by all doctors / nurses / allied health professionals in this group practice when consulting with you.
- For legal related disclosure as required by a court of law (e.g. subpoena, court order. suspected child abuse).
- For research purposes (de-identified, meaning you are not able to be identified from the information given).

If you have any concerns or wish to restrict access to your personal health information please discuss these with your doctor. This practice adheres to principles of the Royal Australian college of General Practitioners Handbook for the Management of health Information in Private Medical Practice, which is available to all patients for inspection.

Access, corrections and privacy concerns:

Pioneer Health acknowledges patients may request access to their medical records. Patients are encouraged to make this request in writing or by completing our Request for Personal Health Information form, and the Practice will respond within a reasonable time.

Pioneer Health will take reasonable steps to correct personal information where it is satisfied they are not accurate or up to date. From time to time, Pioneer will ask patients to verify the personal information held by the practice is correct and up to date. Patients may also request Pioneer Health correct or update their information.

Pioneer Health takes complaints and concerns about the privacy of patients' personal information seriously. Patients should express any privacy concerns in writing. Pioneer Health will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with its complaint resolution procedure.

Policy Review:

Annually