**Kogarah Railway Medical Centre privacy policy**

Current as of: [October 2023]

**Introduction**

This privacy policy is to provide information to you, our patient, on how your personal information (which includes your health information) is collected and used within our practice, and the circumstances in which we may share it with third parties.

Kogarah Railway Medical Centre (Allawah Medical Practice Pty Ltd), are committed to ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of your personal information in accordance with its obligations under the Privacy Act 1988 and other privacy laws. This policy is to inform you about how we handle your personal and health information and applies to all staff at our facility.

As a private sector health service provider, we are required to comply with the Australian Privacy Principles (****APPs****) under the Privacy Act. The APPs regulate how we collect, use and disclose personal information and how individuals may access and correct information held by us.

**Why and when your consent is necessary**

When you register as a patient of our practice, you provide consent for our GPs and practice staff to access and use your personal information so they can provide you with the best possible health care. Only staff who need to see your personal information will have access to it. If we need to use your information for anything else, we will seek additional consent from you to do this.

**Why do we collect, use, hold and share your personal information?**

Our practice will need to collect your personal information to provide health care services to you. Our main purpose for collecting, using, holding and sharing your personal information is to manage your health. We also use it for directly related business activities, such as financial claims and payments, practice audits and accreditation, and business processes (eg staff training).

What personal information do we collect?

The information we will collect about you includes your:

* names, date of birth, gender, country of birth, addresses, contact details
* medical information including medical history, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors
* Medicare number (where available) for identification and claiming purposes

# **What happens if we can’t collect your personal information?**

If you do not provide us with your personal information, we may not be able to provide the level of care and services requested by you and/or your diagnosis and treatment may be inaccurate or incomplete.

Dealing with us anonymously

You have the right to deal with us anonymously or under a pseudonym unless it is impracticable for us to do so or unless we are required or authorised by law to only deal with identified individuals.

How do we collect your personal information?

Our practice may collect your personal information in several different ways.

1. When you make your first appointment our practice staff will collect your personal and demographic information via your registration.
2. During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information such as through My Health Record eg. Via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary, prescription dispensary through electronic transfer of prescriptions (eTP)/Safescript.
3. We may also collect your personal information when you visit our website, send us an email or SMS, telephone us and make an online appointment.
4. In some circumstances personal information may also be collected from other sources. Often this is because it is not practical or reasonable to collect it from you directly. This may include information from:
* your guardian or responsible person
* other involved health care providers, such as specialists, allied health professionals, hospitals, community health services and pathology and diagnostic imaging services
* your health fund, Medicare, or the Department of Veterans’ Affairs (as necessary).

**When, why and with whom do we share your personal information?**

We sometimes share your personal information:

* with third parties who work with our practice for business purposes, such as accreditation agencies or information technology providers – these third parties are required to comply with APPs and this policy
* with other health care providers
* when it is required or authorised by law (eg court subpoenas)
* when it is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to a patient’s life, health or safety or public health or safety, or it is impractical to obtain the patient’s consent
* to assist in locating a missing person
* to establish, exercise or defend an equitable claim
* for the purpose of confidential dispute resolution process
* when there is a statutory requirement to share certain personal information (eg some diseases require mandatory notification)
* during the course of providing medical services, through eTP, My Health Record (eg via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary).
* for administrative and billing purposes
* to send appointment reminders (including by SMS or email)
* for inclusion in a recall register to be advised of follow up visits
* or the purpose of reporting back to your employer or a prospective employer, their authorised representatives and their insurer in the case of a work-related consultation or service
* to provide notifications (including by mail, telephone call, SMS or email) about services recommended by your treating Dr for your care

Only people who need to access your information will be able to do so. Other than in the course of providing medical services or as otherwise described in this policy, our practice will not share personal information with any third party without your consent.

We will not share your personal information with anyone outside Australia (unless under exceptional circumstances that are permitted by law) without your consent.

Our practice will not use your personal information for marketing any of our goods or services directly to you without your express consent. If you do consent, you may opt out of direct marketing at any time by notifying our practice in writing.

Our practice may use your personal information to improve the quality of the services we offer to our patients through research and analysis of our patient data.

We may provide de-identified data to other organisations to improve population health outcomes. The information is secure, patients cannot be identified and the information is stored within Australia. You can let our reception staff know if you do not want your information included.

**How do we store and protect your personal information?**

Your personal information is stored as an electronic record at our practice.

Our practice stores all personal information securely.

Your personal information is stored and protected in an electronic format, in protected information systems or in hard copy format in a secured environment. All computers, and log ins to our clinical software are password protected, and staff are required to adhere to confidentiality agreements.

**How can you access and correct your personal information at our practice?**

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. We require you to put this request in writing or [by presenting this information to the practice. We will only accept emails in exceptional circumstances, and will be required to confirm your identity and obtain a signed consent to request for this information.]. Our practice will respond within a reasonable time. We endeavour to respond within 30days. There may be fees associated with providing this information for the printout of documents.

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 that your personal information held by our practice is correct and current. You may also request that we correct or update your information, and you should make such requests by contacting the practice.

In accordance with the Privacy act 1988, your request to access your record may be declined in the circumstances where we reasonably identify or believe:

* that giving access would pose a serious threat to the life, health or safety of any individual, or to public health or public safety
* giving access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of other individuals
* the request for access is frivolous or vexatious
* the information relates to existing or anticipated legal proceedings between you and the patient, and would not be accessible by the process of discovery in those proceedings
* giving access would reveal your intentions in relation to negotiations with the patient in such a way as to prejudice those negotiations
* giving access would be unlawful
* denying access is required or authorised by or under an Australian law or a court/tribunal order
* you have reason to suspect that unlawful activity, or misconduct of a serious nature, that relates to your functions or activities has been, is being or may be engaged in and giving access would be likely to prejudice the taking of appropriate action in relation to the matter
* giving access would be likely to prejudice one or more enforcement related activities conducted by, or on behalf of, an enforcement body
* giving access would reveal evaluative information generated within your organisation in connection with a commercially sensitive decision-making process.

**How can you lodge a privacy-related complaint, and how will the complaint be handled at our practice?**

We take complaints and concerns regarding privacy seriously. You should express any privacy concerns you may have in writing to the Practice Manager. We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with our resolution procedure. You can email us at ampkrmc@hotmail.com. You must include your mailing address and contact number. We will endeavour to respond to your complaint within a reasonable period. If you are unable with our response, you may refer your complaint to the OAIC. Generally, the OAIC will require you to give them time to respond before they will investigate. For further information visit [www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au) or call the OAIC on 1300 363 992.

**Policy review statement**

This privacy policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur. We will notify patients when we amend this policy by signage in reception Current versions of our privacy policy will be available on our website and will commence form the date of posting.