

# Belrose Medical Centre Privacy Policy

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.

## **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 healthcare. 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 healthcare 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 (e.g. staff training).

## **What personal information do we collect?**

The kinds of personal information that we might collect and hold, including personal information includes:

- 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 (where available) for identification and claiming purposes, if applicable DVA card, Pension, Health Care or Commonwealth Seniors cards
- healthcare identifiers
- health fund details.

## **We will generally collect personal information by the following methods:**

- When you make your first appointment – our practice staff will collect your personal and demographic information through written questionnaires, patient registration forms, and/or verbally.
- During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information, for example through Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (eTP), and My Health Record (i.e. Shared Health Summary, Event Summary).
- In some circumstances, personal information may be collected from other sources if it is not practical or reasonable to collect it from you directly, including from: your guardian or person responsible for you, other healthcare providers, allied health professionals, community health services, hospitals, pathology and diagnostic imaging services, Medicare and DVA (as necessary).
- 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.

## **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 healthcare providers
- when it is required or authorised by law (e.g. 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 (e.g. some diseases require mandatory notification)
- during the course of providing medical services, through eTP, My Health Record (e.g. via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary).

Only people who need to access your information will be able to do so. Other than while 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 in our practice in your electronic health record which is stored in a computer database secured by firewalls, passcodes, and maintained by an up-to-date secure on and off-site back-up system. We ensure that all PCs in the practice are password protected and that electronic information is backed up regularly in the unlikely instance of an adverse event.

#### **How to access, correct or update your personal information:**

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

Our practice acknowledges that patients may request access to their medical records. We require you to request access in writing, by email to the Practice Manager Kathy Carr, [manager@belrosemedical.com.au](mailto:manager@belrosemedical.com.au), or by post addressed to the Practice Manager, Belrose Medical Centre, Shop MM2B Glenrose Village, 56-58 Glen St, Belrose NSW 2085. We endeavour to respond to the request within 30 days. An administration fee may apply for producing records. Some circumstances which may restrict access include if your doctor believes there may be a risk of any physical or mental harm to you or any other person. In most cases this is managed by the doctor going through the health record with you. If your information is requested by another practice, it will only be forwarded with your authorised permission in writing. An administration fee may be payable 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 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 in writing to Kathy Carr, [manager@belrosemedical.com.au](mailto:manager@belrosemedical.com.au).

## **Communication**

We will communicate with you by telephone, SMS and/or email with your prior consent. By letter to your home address or via SMS to your phone. Our online booking system HotDoc sends SMS reminders – they may access your personal details if you subscribe to this service, for more information visit: <https://practices.hotdoc.com.au/privacy-policy/>. Communication via email of identifiable information about you to health professionals involved in your care is done using an encryption program. You may choose to have direct email communication with staff at the Practice or allow direct email communication with other providers, but you need to be aware that this is not secured. For this communication we will need your consent. We will take steps to reduce the risk of unsecured information being seen by others including confirming the email address of the intended recipient.

## **How you can lodge a privacy-related complaint:**

We take complaints and concerns regarding privacy seriously. You should express any privacy concerns you may have in writing to our Privacy Officer, Kathy Carr:

- 1) by email to [manager@belrosemedical.com.au](mailto:manager@belrosemedical.com.au)
- 2) by post:  
The Privacy Officer  
Belrose Medical Centre  
Shop MM2B Glenrose Village  
56-58 Glen St  
Belrose NSW 2085

Any complaint will be investigated by the Privacy Officer, and you will be notified of the making of a decision in relation to your complaint as soon as is practicable after it has been made, usually within 30 days.

## **Further information on Privacy Legislation:**

You may also contact the OAIC. Generally, the OAIC will require you to give them time to respond before they investigate, phone: 1300 363 992, visit <https://www.oaic.gov.au>.

**Policy review statement:** This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur. to ensure it is up to date with any changes that may occur from time to time.

- Last reviewed May 2023
- Next review May 2024