

balance!

Health Care

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Privacy Policy

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Current as of: 8 April 2016

Balance! Springwood Family Practice

Balance! Edmonton Family Practice

Blackheath Family Medical Centre

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.

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 (eg staff training).

What personal information do we collect?

The information we will collect about you 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
- healthcare identifiers
- health fund details.

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 will collect your personal information:

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. This may be collected through Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (eTP), Electronic Transfer of Radiology, Electronic Transfer of Pathology, and information from your My Health Record/PCEHR system, through a Shared Health Summary or an Event Summary.
3. 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.

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 healthcare 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 Veteran's Affairs (as necessary).

Who do we share your personal information with?

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 (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)
- To allow medical students and authorised staff to participate in medical training/teaching
- For the purposes of medical research and peer education only where de-identified information is used
- Follow up reminder/recall notices by letter or telephone (including contact via SMS to the provided mobile phone number) for treatment and preventative health care
- during the course of providing medical services, through Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (eTP), Electronic Transfer of Radiology, Electronic Transfer of Pathology, and information from your My Health Record/PCEHR system, through a Shared Health Summary or an Event Summary.

Only people that 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.

How do we store and protect your personal information?

The practice holds personal information in our clinical software, which is entered either by direct entry or by electronically scanning paper documents into the patient file. Paper documents are securely destroyed once scanned to the clinical software. Your personal information may include as visual informations such as X-rays, CT scans, and occasionally photos we may take if agreed with you at the time.

Our practice stores all personal information securely. This is done in electronic format, in protected information systems. All passwords to this system are tightly controlled and our IT provider, Rend Tech, has signed a confidentiality agreement for their staff and contractors.

If the practice receives unsolicited personal information about a patient from another health practitioner or practice, the practice will hold such information for a period of four (4) weeks on the presumption that the patient will attend the practice for a consultation. If the patient does not attend the practice within four (4)

weeks the unsolicited information about the patient will be securely destroyed.

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 (letter or email) and our practice will respond within 30 days. You may be charged \$20 or a copy for medical record.

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 Practice Administration Manager at your local practice or by emailing kategunn@balancehealthclinic.com.au.

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. We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with our resolution procedure. We will contact you within 30 days of receiving your complaint.

To make a complaint please contact Kate Gunn on 1300 854 340 or email her on kategunn@balancehealthclinic.com.au. You may also make your complaint in writing addressed to:

Balance! Healthcare
PO Box 6024
Silverwater NSW 2128

You may also contact the OAIC. Generally the OAIC will require you to give Balance! Healthcare time to respond, before they will investigate. For further information visit www.oaic.gov.au or call the OAIC on 1300 336 002.

Privacy and our website

We do not currently collect personal information via our website or Facebook page. If this changes in the future we will update this privacy policy.

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 your patients when we amend this policy by placing a sign on the front counter.