

# Merrindale Medical Centre Privacy Policy

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to outline how Merrindale Medical Centre complies with confidentiality and privacy obligations. As an organisation; Merrindale Medical centre principal concern is and always will be the health of patients who visit our practice. A high level of trust and confidentiality is required to ensure the confidence of the patients we serve.

*Patients will be assured that:*

- - their privacy will be protected when visiting the Medical Centre,
- - the information collected and retained in our records is correct and up-to-date, and
- - that they can access their information for review.

## **Health information**

Merrindale Medical Centre recognises that the information we collect is often of a highly sensitive nature and as an organisation we have adopted the highest privacy compliance standards relevant to Merrindale Medical Centre to ensure personal information is protected.

For administrative and billing purposes, and to enable the patients to be attended to by other medical practitioners at Merrindale Medical Centre, patient information is shared between the medical practitioners and other health providers at the medical centre. Merrindale Medical Centre and the medical practitioners may collect personal information regarding patients (including health information) for the purpose of providing medical services and treatment.

*Personal information collected will generally include:*

- - the patient's name, address, telephone number and Medicare number,
- - current drugs or treatments used by the patient,
- - previous/current medical history, including, where clinically relevant, a family medical history, and
- - the name of any health service provider or medical specialist to whom the patient is referred, copies of any letters of referrals and copies of any reports back.

Merrindale Medical Centre *may access information:*

- - provided directly by the patient,
- - provided on the patient's behalf with the patient's consent,
- - from a health service provider who refers the patient to medical practitioners providing services at or from Merrindale Medical Centre, or from health service providers to whom patients are referred.

## **Use or disclosure of personal information**

Personal information collected by Merrindale Medical Centre may be used or disclosed:

- - for the purpose advised to the patient at the time of collection of the information,
- - as required for delivery of the health service to the patient,
- - as required for the ordinary operation of our services (i.e. to refer the patient to a medical specialist or other health service provider),
- - as required under compulsion of law, or
- - where there is a serious and imminent threat to an individual's life, health, or safety; or a serious threat to public health or public safety.

Merrindale Medical Centre may use or disclose personal information for quality assurance, training, billing, liaising with government offices regarding Medicare entitlements and payments and as may be required by the Medical Centre's insurers.

### ***Accuracy of your information***

Merrindale Medical Centre is committed to ensuring your information is accurate and has processes in place to ensure that the accuracy of this information is maintained. If you believe that the personal information the Medical Centre holds about you is inaccurate, please inform Medical Centre staff when next attending the Centre.

### ***Security of information collected***

Other than as described in this Policy or permitted under privacy principles, Merrindale Medical Centre uses its reasonable endeavours to ensure that identifying health information is not disclosed to any person unnecessarily or irresponsibly.

Due to the sensitive nature of the information collected by the Medical Centre to provide its services, extra precautions are taken to ensure the security of that information. Information may be stored electronically and / or in hard copy form. All electronically stored files are password-protected on several levels, and regular backups of data are performed.

Merrindale Medical Centre requires its employees to observe obligations of confidentiality in the course of their employment with all staff/contractors signing Confidentiality Agreements.

### **Website privacy**

Merrindale Medical Centre website contains links to other sites. Please be aware that Merrindale Medical Centre is not responsible for the privacy practices of any linked sites. We encourage users who leave our site to read the privacy statements of each and every linked website that they choose to visit. All links to external sites are provided for your convenience. The information, products and advertisements contained in the linked sites are neither approved nor endorsed by Merrindale Medical Centre, and our organisation is not responsible for such information, products or advertisements.

Your privacy is important to us and we want you to feel comfortable visiting our website. Any personal information that patients give to us, including e-mail addresses, will be used only in the following ways:

- - personal data given to us by you will be securely stored
- - we will not provide your personal data to any third party without your permission,
- - we do not automatically collect your personal e-mail address simply because you visit our site
- - if we join with a third party to provide services and you sign up for those services, we will share your name and other contact information necessary for our partner to provide the services to you,
- - if you view specific pages or download information from specific pages on our website, we will track and add the number of your visits to the aggregate number of visits by all users in order to better design our website,
- - we may share aggregate demographic information with our affiliates. This is not linked to any personal information that can identify you or any other visitor to our web site.

By using Merrindale Medical Centre's website, you consent to the collection and use of your personal information as detailed in this Privacy Policy. We will post any changes to this Privacy

Policy on our website so that you are kept up to date with the type of information we collect and the ways in which we use it.

### ***Changes to the Privacy Policy***

Merrindale Medical Centre has the right to change the Privacy Policy at any time. If there are updates to Merrindale Medical Centre's Privacy Policy, we will address the changes promptly and update the revision date of this document.

### **Obtaining further information**

If patients require more information regarding Merrindale Medical Centre, its services and facilities, they can:

- - ask a staff member,
- - access Merrindale Medical Centre website, or
- - take a copy of Merrindale Medical Centre 'Practice Information Sheet' located in the waiting room.

### **Disclaimer**

While we make every effort to protect your privacy, we may need to disclose personal information when required by law where we have a good-faith belief that such action is necessary to comply with a current judicial proceeding, a court order or legal process served on our company or site.