

## **Patient rights**

### **Policy**

Our practice respects the rights and needs of all patients.

### **Procedure**

No patient is refused access to clinical assessment or medical treatment on the basis of gender, race, disability, Aboriginality, age, religion, ethnicity, beliefs, sexual preference or medical condition. Provisions are implemented to ensure patients with a disability can access our services.

The practice identifies important/significant cultural groups within our practice including non-English speaking background patients, religious groups and those of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background. We endeavour to continue to develop any strategies required to meet their needs.

Our practice provides respectful care at all times and is mindful of our patients' personal dignity. We have a plan in place to respectfully manage patients in distress.

Visual and auditory privacy for patients is provided in the waiting room and during the consultation. The waiting room provides a television to assist patient auditory privacy. Each consulting and treatment room has a curtain around the examination bed for patient privacy, and the doors to the consulting rooms are closed for each consultation.

Patient privacy and confidentiality is assured for consultations and in medical and accounts records, appointments, telephone calls and electronic media including computer information. Our practice does not leave patient information in any format in areas of the practice or surrounds that would allow unauthorised access. All members of our practice team sign a privacy agreement upon acceptance of work, and risk immediate dismissal should a breach of this agreement occur. Information no longer required that contains any reference to patients, including diagnosis reports, specialist letters, accounts etc. is securely disposed of via shredding.

Patients have a right to access their personal health information and may request to view their record or obtain a copy.

Our privacy policy for the management of health information is displayed in the waiting room and also on the practice information sheet and practice website, and is readily presented to anyone who asks. This policy includes information about the type of information and data this practice collects, how we collect it, use it and protect it, and to whom we may disclose it to

Patients have the right to refuse any treatment, advice or procedure. Our general practitioners discuss all aspects of treatment and will offer alternatives should a patient seek another medical opinion (refer to **Section 7.12 – Management of a patient refusing treatment or advice**).

For ongoing management of patients should they leave the area, our general practitioners will ask for the forwarding practitioner/practice address and facilitate a transfer of health information. A copy of the patient's health record or health summary will be sent directly to the new location via *secure priority post, eHealth upload (My Health records)*.

This practice acknowledges a patient's right to complain. We provide mechanisms to ensure that this feedback, as well as positive comments and suggestions, are freely received and implemented where possible.

Patients are provided with sufficient information about the purpose, importance, benefits, risks and possible costs associated with proposed investigations, referrals or treatments to enable patients to make informed decisions about their health.

Patients are provided with adequate information about our practice to facilitate access to care including our arrangements for care outside our normal opening hours.

Our practice participates in the RACGP Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) program and regularly has Registrars on-site; patients are advised of this with a notice in the waiting room. If undergraduate students are on practice placement and observe patient consultations, the patient is asked for their prior consent to the presence of this third party and this consent is documented in their health record.

Patient consent is also sought for participation in our health reminder systems and any research projects we may participate in. Patients are advised that any prior consent given can be withdrawn at any time.