

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure patients who receive care from Medical Specialists on Collins are comfortable in entrusting their health information to the Practice. This policy provides information as to how personal information (which includes health information) is collected and used within the Practice, and the circumstances in which it may be disclosed to third parties.

Consent for the collection of personal information:

Medical Specialists on Collins will only interpret and apply a patient's consent for the primary purpose for which it was provided.

The staff of Medical Specialists on Collins will seek additional consent from the patient if the personal information collected is to be used for any other purpose.

The collection and holding of personal information:

Medical Specialists on Collins will need to collect personal information in order to provide clinical services to a patient at the practice.

Collected personal information will include:

- Name, address and contact details
- Medicare number (where available, for identification and claiming purposes)
- Healthcare identifiers
- Medical information including medical history, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors

A patient's personal information may be held at Medical Specialists on Collins in a number of forms:

- As paper records
- As electronic records
- As visual records such as x-rays, CT scans videos and photographs
- As audio recordings

Medical Specialists on Collins' procedure for collecting personal information is as follows:

1. Practice staff collects patient personal and demographic information via registration when patients present to the practice for the first time.
2. During the course of providing medical services, the Practice's healthcare practitioners will consequently collect further personal information.
3. Personal information may also be collected from the patient's guardian or responsible person (where practicable and necessary), or from any other involved healthcare specialists.

Medical Specialists on Collins holds to the best of its ability and knowledge, all personal information securely, whether in electronic format, in protected information systems or in hard copy format in a secured environment.

Use and disclosure of personal information:

Personal information will only be used for the purpose of providing medical services and for claims and payments, unless otherwise consented to.

Some disclosure may occur to third parties engaged by or for Medical Specialists on Collins for business purposes, such the provision of information technology. These third parties are required to comply with this Privacy Policy.

Medical Specialists on Collins will always attempt to inform the patient where there is a statutory requirement to disclose certain personal information (for example, some diseases required mandatory notification).

Medical Specialists on Collins will not disclose personal health information to any third party other than in the course of providing medical services, without full disclosure to the patient or the recipient, the reason for the information transfer and full consent from the patient.

Exceptions to disclosure without patient consent are where the information is:

- Required by law
- Necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to the patient's life, health or safety or public health 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 a confidential dispute resolution process

Medical Specialists on Collins will use personal information to send preventative health reminders or newsletters to patients. Patients may opt out of these services at any time by notifying the Practice in a letter or email.

Medical Specialists on Collins evaluates all unsolicited information it receives to decide if it should be kept, acted on or destroyed.

Access to personal information:

Medical Specialists on Collins acknowledges patients may request access to their medical records. Patients are encouraged to make this request in writing, and the Practice will respond within a reasonable time.

Corrections to personal information:

Medical Specialists on Collins will take reasonable steps to correct personal health information where it is satisfied they are not accurate or up to date. From time to time, the Practice staff will ask patients to verify the personal information held by the Practice is correct and up to date. Patients may also request the practice corrects or updates their information, and patients should make such requests in writing.

Privacy concerns:

Medical Specialists on Collins takes complaints and concerns about privacy of patients' personal information seriously. Patients should express any privacy concerns in writing to Practice Management. The Practice will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with our complaint resolution procedure.