



Five White Street Surgery Privacy Policy

Current as of: 22 June 2026

Introduction

This privacy policy provides information to you, our patient, about how your personal information, including your health information, is collected, used, stored and shared by 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 team members to access and use your personal information so they can provide you with healthcare. Only team members who need to see your personal information will have access to it. If we need to use your information for a purpose not described in this policy, we will seek your additional consent unless the use or disclosure is otherwise permitted or required by law.

Why do we collect, use, hold and share your personal information?

Our practice collects 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, accreditation, quality improvement, staff training and business processes.

What personal information do we collect?

The information we collect about you may include:

- your name, date of birth, address, contact details and emergency contact details
- medical information, including medical history, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors
- clinical information generated during your care, including consultation notes, referrals, correspondence, investigation results, recalls and reminders
- audio, transcription or draft clinical documentation information where a practice-approved AI scribe is used with your consent
- Medicare number for identification and claiming purposes, where available
- Individual Healthcare Identifier and other healthcare identifiers
- health fund details and Department of Veterans' Affairs details, where relevant
- billing, payment and appointment information
- information collected when you contact us by phone, email, SMS, our website, online booking systems or other electronic services.

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 may collect your personal information in several different ways:

1. When you make your first appointment, our practice team will collect your personal and demographic information, usually through our registration form.
2. During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal and health information. This may include information collected through My Health Record, Shared Health Summaries, Event Summaries, electronic prescriptions and electronic transfer of prescriptions.
3. During a consultation, your treating clinician may collect information through a practice-approved AI scribe, but only after obtaining your consent where required.
4. We may collect personal information when you visit our website, send us an email or SMS, telephone us, make an online appointment, use patient messaging systems, or communicate with us using social media or other electronic services.
5. In some circumstances, we may collect personal information from other sources because it is not practical or reasonable to collect it from you directly. This may include information from your guardian or responsible person, other healthcare providers, hospitals, allied health providers, pathology or diagnostic imaging services, Medicare, your health fund, or the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Use of AI scribes

Some clinicians at Five White Street Surgery may use a practice-approved artificial intelligence (AI) scribe to help prepare clinical documentation, such as draft progress notes, summaries, referrals or letters. An AI scribe may listen to or process information from the consultation to create a draft document for the clinician.

- **Consent:** Your clinician will ask for your consent before using an AI scribe in a consultation. You can decline or withdraw consent at any time, and this will not affect the care you receive. If another person is present in the room or on a call, they may also need to agree before recording or transcription starts.
- **Clinical responsibility:** The AI scribe does not replace your clinician, make clinical decisions, diagnose you, or determine treatment. Your clinician remains responsible for your care and must review, edit and approve any AI-generated draft before it is saved or used.
- **Privacy and security:** Information processed by an AI scribe may include personal and health information discussed during the consultation. We only use practice-approved systems after considering privacy, security and clinical safety. We do not use publicly available AI chatbots for patient consultations or clinical records.
- **Service providers:** An AI scribe provider may process information as a service provider to your GP. We require service providers to handle personal information only for agreed purposes and under appropriate privacy and security arrangements. Your information must not be sold or used for advertising.
- **Overseas processing:** We require that AI scribes used in our practice use Australian based data centers and comply with Australian privacy principles.
- **Questions:** You may ask your clinician or our practice team for more information about any AI scribe used at the practice, including how information is processed, stored and protected.

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, information technology providers, secure messaging providers, online appointment providers, payment providers and AI scribe providers - these third parties are required to comply with the Australian Privacy Principles and this policy where applicable
- with other healthcare providers involved in your care
- when it is required or authorised by law, such as in response to a court subpoena or mandatory notification requirement
- 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 where it is impracticable to obtain the patient's consent
- to assist in locating a missing person
- to establish, exercise or defend a legal or equitable claim
- for the purpose of a confidential dispute resolution process
- during the course of providing medical services and through electronic prescribing, secure messaging and My Health Record, including Shared Health Summaries and Event Summaries, where relevant.

Only people who 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 unless it is required or authorised by law.

We will not disclose your personal information to anyone outside Australia unless we have taken reasonable steps required by the Australian Privacy Principles, you have consented where required, or the disclosure is otherwise permitted by law.

Our practice will not use your personal information for direct marketing of our goods or services without your express consent. If you do consent, you may opt out of direct marketing at any time by notifying our practice in writing.

We may provide de-identified data to other organisations to improve population health outcomes. De-identified information should not identify you. You can let our reception team know if you do not want your information included in this type of secondary use, where an opt-out is available.

How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information is stored at our practice in electronic and, where relevant, paper form. Our practice uses systems and processes designed to protect the privacy, security, quality and integrity of the personal and health information we hold. Appropriate practice team members are trained in privacy, confidentiality and information security policies and procedures.

Correspondence

Electronic information is transmitted using secure methods wherever practicable, such as secure messaging software. Where medical information is sent by post, secure postage or courier services may be used depending on the circumstances. Incoming patient correspondence and diagnostic results are handled by authorised team members. Items for collection or postage are kept in a secure area not in view of the public.

Facsimile and other devices

Facsimile machines, printers and other communication devices are located in areas accessible only to GPs and authorised practice team members. Confidential faxes are sent only after reasonable steps have been taken to confirm the recipient is the intended receiver. Faxes received by the practice are managed according to incoming correspondence protocols.

Emails and electronic communication

Emails and other electronic communications may be at risk of interception. Private medical information will only be transmitted by regular email with your informed consent, unless another lawful basis applies. Our preferred method for electronic delivery of sensitive personal information, where the recipient does not have access to a medical industry encrypted health messaging solution, is to provide a time-limited password-protected share after verifying the recipient's identity and authority to access the information.

Patient consultations

Patient privacy and security of information is maximised during consultations by closing consulting room doors and using curtains or privacy screens where appropriate. Staff will knock and wait for a response, or contact the relevant person internally, before entering a closed consulting or treatment room unless there is an emergency. Clinicians and practice team members are responsible for ensuring prescription paper, sample medications, medical records and related personal patient information are kept secure when they are not in attendance.

Medical records

Our patient health records are held electronically. The health record created and maintained for your ongoing care is the property of the practice. You do not own the physical or electronic record itself, but you have a right to request access to, and correction of, your personal information under the Privacy Act 1988 and relevant state or territory health records legislation.

Patient health records can be accessed by appropriate team members when required for your care or for authorised practice purposes. Active and inactive patient health records are stored securely.

How long do we keep your personal information?

We keep health records and other personal information for as long as required by applicable law, professional obligations and the needs of patient care. When personal information is no longer required and we are legally permitted to do so, it will be securely destroyed or de-identified.

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. Requests for access to medical records should be made in writing so we can verify your identity and manage the request safely.

Medical records can be transferred to and from Five White Street Surgery. To comply with privacy obligations, patients are required to sign an authority or release form. It is helpful if the receiving doctor specifies the information required so unnecessary copying can be avoided. A reasonable administration fee may apply for searching, printing, copying or transferring records; we will advise you of any fee before processing the request. We aim to process requests within a reasonable timeframe and will let you know if more time is required.

Our practice will take reasonable steps to correct your personal information where the information is not accurate, up to date, complete, relevant or not misleading. From time to time, we may ask you to verify that your personal information held by our practice is correct and up to date. You may also request that we correct or update your information in writing to the Practice Manager or privacy contact officer.

How can you lodge a privacy-related complaint, and how will the complaint be handled at our practice?

We take complaints and concerns about privacy seriously. You should express any privacy concerns in writing. We will attempt to resolve your complaint in accordance with our complaints resolution procedure and will respond within a reasonable timeframe. If the matter is complex and requires more time, we will let you know.

If you have questions or a complaint about the privacy of your personal information, please ask to speak to the privacy contact officer at the practice:

Katherine Lara – Practice Manager
Five White Street Surgery
5 White Street, Jannali NSW 2226
Phone 02 9528 5266
Email: pm@5wss.com.au

You may also contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC). Generally, the OAIC will require you to give the practice time to respond before it investigates. For further information visit www.oaic.gov.au or call the OAIC on 1300 363 992.

Privacy and our website

Our commitment to protecting your privacy includes the use of our website. Our website may use cookies or similar technologies to maintain site preferences and generate site usage statistics. If our website collects personal information, we will take reasonable steps to make you aware of the collection and the purposes for which the information is collected.

When you follow a link to an online appointment booking provider, you may need to provide personal information to secure your booking. This information is managed by the online booking provider and may also be passed to our appointment software by encrypted electronic communication.

Our online booking provider's privacy policy can be found at: <https://www.hotdoc.com.au/practices/privacy-policy/>

Policy review statement

This privacy policy will be reviewed regularly, at least annually, to ensure it remains applicable to current practice procedures and legal requirements. Five White Street Surgery will notify patients when we make material changes to this policy, for example by updating the policy on our website, displaying a notice at reception or in the waiting room, or using another appropriate communication method.