

Privacy, Confidentiality, and Medical Records

Respecting your privacy and maintaining confidentiality are fundamental to psychiatric care. This leaflet explains how your personal information and medical records are handled, and the circumstances in which information may be shared.

Your Right to Privacy

Your personal and health information is managed in accordance with:

- Australian privacy legislation
- Professional and ethical standards

Information collected during your care is used to support **safe, effective, and appropriate treatment**.

What Information Is Collected

Information collected may include:

- Personal details (such as name and contact information)
- Medical and mental health history
- Information discussed during consultations
- Correspondence and reports related to your care

This information forms part of your medical record.

Confidentiality of Your Information

Information shared during consultations is treated as confidential.

Your information will not be disclosed to others without your consent, **except in specific circumstances required by law or safety considerations**.

Sharing Information with Other Professionals

With your consent, relevant information may be shared with:

- Your GP
- Other treating health professionals

This supports coordinated and safe care.

Written communication to your GP is a routine part of psychiatric practice.

Exceptions to Confidentiality

There are limited circumstances where information may be disclosed without consent, including:

- Where there is a serious risk to your safety or the safety of others
- Where disclosure is required by law (e.g. court orders, mandatory reporting)
- Where necessary to provide emergency care

These situations are managed carefully and only relevant information is disclosed.

Medical Records

Your medical record is a confidential clinical document.

Records are:

- Stored securely
- Accessed only by authorised staff
- Maintained in accordance with legal requirements

Records are kept for the period required by law.

Access to Your Medical Records

You may request access to your medical records.

Requests:

- Must be made in writing
- Are subject to legal and clinical considerations

- May involve a fee

In some circumstances, access may be limited or provided in a particular format to protect your wellbeing or the privacy of others.

Corrections to Information

If you believe information in your record is inaccurate, you may request a correction.

Requests will be considered in accordance with privacy legislation and professional obligations.

Use of Information for Reports

Information from your medical record may be used to:

- Prepare clinical correspondence
- Communicate with your GP
- Prepare reports where appropriate and agreed

Reports prepared for third parties may have a different purpose and scope from clinical records.

Questions or Concerns About Privacy

If you have questions or concerns about privacy or confidentiality, these can be discussed during your appointment or raised with clinic staff.

Protecting your privacy is an important part of providing safe psychiatric care.
