

HEALTH INFORMATION PRIVACY STATEMENT

Know your rights

FACT SHEET - USE AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION

Your privacy and confidentiality will be fully respected. This fact sheet sets out why we collect your information and how that information will be used. To access an electronic copy of this document use this QR code or visit: easthealth.co.nz/health-info-privacy



PURPOSE

We collect your health information to provide a record of care. This helps you receive quality treatment and care when you need it. We also collect your health information to help:

- keep you and others safe
- plan and fund health services
- carry out authorised research
- train healthcare professionals
- prepare and publish statistics
- improve government services

HOW WE COLLECT YOUR INFORMATION

Directly:

- from you during consultations
- from other healthcare providers involved in your care

Indirectly:

- National health systems, such as the National Health Index (NHI), Aotearoa Immunisation Register (AIR) and national screening programmes
- Electronic systems or referrals, e.g. Radiology or Pharmacy providers
- Hospitals or specialists (e.g. referrals, discharge summaries)
- Family members or caregivers where appropriate
- Shared care systems, e.g. Your Health Summary or Primary Health Organisation
- Third-party agencies such as ACC or insurance providers
- Community service providers e.g. Plunket (Whānau Awhina)

Where information is received indirectly from a source other than the agencies listed above, we will take reasonable steps to ensure that you are notified of this. There may be instances where you may not be notified, for example:

- Information is expected to be shared to support your health and wellbeing
- You are unable to be contacted, despite reasonable efforts
- There are legal, safety or public health reasons not to notify

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

You have the right to know where your information is kept, who has access rights, and if the system has audit log capability, as well as who has viewed or updated your information. Your information will be kept securely to prevent unauthorised access.

INFORMATION QUALITY

We're required to keep your information accurate, up-to-date and relevant for your treatment and care.

- You have the right to access and correct your health information.
- You have the right to see and request a copy of your health information. You don't have to explain why you're requesting that information, but may be required to provide proof of your identity. If you request a second copy of that information within 12 months, you may have to pay an administration fee.
- You can ask for health information about you to be corrected. Practice staff should provide you with reasonable assistance. If your healthcare provider chooses not to change that information, you can have this noted on your file.
- Many practices now offer a patient portal, which allows you to view some of your practice health records online. Ask your practice if they're offering a portal so you can register.

USE OF YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION

Below are some examples of how your health information is used.

- If your practice is contracted to a Primary Health Organisation (PHO), the PHO may use your information for clinical and administrative purposes including obtaining subsidised funding for you.
- Health NZ (Te Whatu Ora) and directly contracted service providers, use your information to provide treatment and care and to improve the quality of their services.
- A clinical audit may be conducted by a qualified health practitioner to review the quality of services provided to you. They may also view health records if the audit involves checking on health matters.
- When you choose to register in a health program (e.g. immunisation or breast screening), relevant information may be shared with other health agencies.
- The Ministry of Health uses your demographic information to assign a unique number to you on the National Health Index (NHI). This NHI number will help identify you when you use health services.
- The Ministry of Health holds health information to measure how well health services are delivered and to plan and fund future health services. Auditors may occasionally conduct financial audits of your health practitioner. The auditors may review your records and may contact you to check that you received those services.
- Notification of births and deaths to the Births, Deaths and Marriages register may be performed electronically to streamline a person's interactions with the government.

RESEARCH

Your anonymized health information may be used in research approved by an ethics committee.

- Research which may directly or indirectly identify you can only be published if the researcher has previously obtained your consent and the study has received ethics approval.
- Under the law, you are not required to give consent to the use of your health information if it's for unpublished research or statistical purposes, or if it's published in a way that doesn't identify you.

IF YOU CHOOSE NOT TO SHARE YOUR INFORMATION

- This may limit the care and treatment that can be provided.
- This may also affect the accuracy or safety of your diagnosis or care.
- Talk to your health practitioner if you have any concerns.

COMPLAINTS

If you are concerned about the way your health information is handled, talk to your healthcare provider in the first instance. If unresolved, contact the Office of the Privacy Commissioner www.privacy.org.nz