



Deniliquin Clinic

Deniliquin Clinic privacy policy

Current as of: 02/01/2025

1. Introduction

This privacy policy is to provide information to you, our patient, on how your personal information (which includes your health information) is collected and used within our practice, and the circumstances in which we may share it with third parties.

2. Why and when your consent is necessary

When you register as a patient of our practice, you provide consent for our GPs and practice staff to access and use your personal information so they can provide you with the best possible healthcare. Only staff who need to see your personal information will have access to it. If we need to use your information for anything else, we will seek additional consent from you to do this.

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

Our practice will need to collect 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 and accreditation, and business processes (eg staff training).

4. What information do we collect?

The personal information we will collect about you includes your:

- Names, date of birth, addresses, contact details
- Medical information including medical history, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors
- Medicare number (where available) for identification and claiming purposes
- Healthcare identifiers
- Health fund details.

Health information is not confined to information contained in the actual clinical record. It includes any information or opinion about a patient's health status, their medical conditions or disability and treatment plans; information collected about a person for providing healthcare (e.g. scans or photos); other information related to a patient's physical or mental health.

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 are authorised by law to only deal with identified individuals.

5. 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 staff will collect your personal and demographic information via your registration.
2. During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information.
3. Our practice utilises eHealth services that may require information sharing such as My Health Record.
4. We may also collect your personal information if you use a form on our website (such as contact or feedback form), send us an email or SMS, telephone us or communicate with us using social media.

5. In some circumstances personal information may also be collected from other sources. Often this is because it is not practical or reasonable to collect it from you directly. This may include information from:
- your guardian or responsible person
 - other involved healthcare providers, such as specialists, allied health professionals, hospitals, community health services and pathology and diagnostic imaging services
 - your health fund, Medicare, or the Department of Veterans' Affairs (as necessary).

6. When, why and with whom do we share your personal information?

We sometimes share your personal information:

- with other healthcare providers for the purpose of your integrated care
- when it is required or authorised by law (eg court subpoenas)
- 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 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 confidential dispute resolution process
- when there is a statutory requirement to share certain personal information (eg some diseases require mandatory notification)
- during the course of providing medical services, through eHealth services like My Health Record etc.
- with third parties who work with our practice for business purposes, such as accreditation agencies or information technology providers – these third parties are required to comply with APPs and this policy

Only people who need to access your information will be able to do so. Other than while providing medical services or as otherwise described in this policy, our practice will not share personal information with any third party without your consent.

We will not share your personal information with anyone outside Australia (unless under exceptional circumstances that are permitted by law) without your consent.

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

Our practice may use your personal information to improve the quality of the services we offer to our patients through research and analysis of our patient data.

We may provide de-identified data to other organisations to improve population health outcomes. The information is secure, patients cannot be identified, and the information is stored within Australia. You can let our reception staff know if you do not want your information included.

Our practice may also share de-identified data with external organisations for purposes such as financial analysis, program evaluation, and healthcare service planning. This data is shared securely and is used to support the improvement of health workforce programs and healthcare services in NSW and Australia. Patients cannot be identified from this data. If you prefer not to have your information included in these processes, please inform our reception staff so we can ensure your preferences are respected.

7. How do we store and protect your personal information?

Your personal information may be stored at our practice in various forms including secure electronic records, paper records, visual records (x-rays, CT scans, photos and videos), audio recordings.

Our practice stores all personal information securely. Electronic records are maintained in password-protected systems with access restricted to authorised personnel only. Paper records are stored in secure, locked cabinets within areas accessible only to staff. Visual and audio records are stored in similarly secure environments.

Our practice uses firewall protection, antivirus software, and regular system updates to ensure the security of electronic data. Access to personal information is monitored and logged to prevent unauthorized access. We continually review and update our security protocols to safeguard your information effectively.

All staff and contractors sign confidentiality agreements and are trained in maintaining patient privacy and confidentiality. Practice staff, like medical practitioners, have a duty to protect the privacy and confidentiality of patient information. They only have access to the information that they need to know to do their job, and there are appropriate access controls in place.

8. Updating your personal information at our practice

Maintaining up to date personal information is imperative so that we can provide you with optimal care. Our practice will take reasonable steps to correct your personal information, and from time to time we will ask you to verify that your personal information held by us is correct and current.

If your personal information changes, we request that you advise us as soon as practicable. You may update your details by speaking directly with reception staff, or by requesting an Update Details form.

9. Accessing your records

Our practice acknowledges patients may request access to their records, and we comply with the Health and Privacy Act NSW 2002 in relation to providing access to medical records.

- The request must be in writing to the Practice Manager, stating the name and current address of the individual making the request
- Identification of the individual is required with a 3-point identity check
- Requests must identify what health information is specifically sought ('full medical record' is appropriate)
- Further requirements for access to children's records may apply

Deniliquin Clinic charges a fee for all medical records requests.

For further information please see our Accessing Medical Records Policy.

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

We take complaints and concerns regarding privacy very seriously. You should express any privacy concerns you may have in writing to the Practice Manager. We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with our resolution procedure.

The Practice Manager can be contacted by emailing practicemanager@denclinic.com.au or at 409 George St Deniliquin, NSW 2710.

The Practice Manager will contact you to follow up and provide a resolution. If a complaint is made anonymously, be assured the Practice Manager will complete an investigation and rectify the complaint.

You may also contact the Health Care Complaints Commission on 1800 043 159, or the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) on 1300 363 992 or visit www.oaic.gov.au. Generally, these bodies will require you to give the clinic time to respond before they will investigate.

11. Our website and social media

Our website uses cookies and website analytics to improve functionality and understand how users interact with our site. Cookies are small data files stored on your device that help us recognize your preferences and improve your browsing experience. The data collected may include information such as your IP address, browser type, and pages visited. This information is aggregated and de-identified to ensure your privacy and is used only for analytical purposes.

By using our website, you consent to the collection and use of your information as outlined above. If you do not wish to accept cookies, you can adjust your browser settings to decline them. Please note that this may affect your ability to fully utilize our website's features.

While our practice manages social media pages to share health information, updates, and engage with the community, we do not have control over how third-party platforms handle the information you share. Any comments, messages, or interactions you make on these platforms are subject to their privacy policies and terms of use.

If you choose to interact with us through social media platforms (e.g., by commenting, liking, or sending private messages), please note that any information you provide, including personal details, may be visible to us and potentially to other users, depending on your privacy settings and the platform's policies. To ensure the confidentiality of your personal information we strongly advise against sharing sensitive details via social media. For private or confidential matters please contact our practice directly through phone, email, or the contact form on our website.

12. Policy review

This privacy policy will be reviewed biennially to ensure it is in accordance with any changes that may occur. We will notify patients of updates to our Privacy Policy via notices in the waiting room, email and social media posts.