



WHAT HAPPENS TO INFORMATION ABOUT ME?

Alfred Health Privacy Statement

Melbourne Sexual Health Centre

Tel: (03) 9341 6200

WHAT HAPPENS TO INFORMATION ABOUT ME?

Protecting patient privacy is something we respect at Alfred Health. Throughout The Alfred, Caulfield Hospital, Sandringham Hospital, and Melbourne Sexual Health Centre (MSHC) you are made aware of why your information is collected, used, and disclosed. Wherever possible, we will provide you with choices about how your information is used and to whom it is disclosed. Confidentiality of health information is assured. Information is stored in a secure manner, both paper-based and electronically. We support, promote and comply with the 11 Health Privacy Principles (HPPs) in the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic).

Your health information will only be used and disclosed for the purposes for which it was collected and be protected from misuse.

The collection or sharing of information is limited to that which is necessary, rather than what may be useful in the future. It is important to be clear about the purposes for which information is being shared. It is also important to be open with you about why information is being shared and with whom, what will happen to it, and how you can get access to it and correct it if necessary.

When you become a patient of Melbourne Sexual Health Centre, which is part of Alfred Health, a record is made containing your name, address, contact details and other information such as the nature of the problem for which you seek treatment and the treatment or advice you were given. Every time you attend, new information is added to your record. The Alfred and Melbourne Sexual Health Centre maintain separate medical records. Your information may also be included on clinical databases where necessary for your treatment or ongoing care.

WHY IS THIS INFORMATION NECESSARY?

It is necessary for us to collect and keep this information to ensure that each health care professional involved in your care has all the facts and is able to help you the best they can. Your previous history of care can help us quickly identify which treatments are likely to be safe and effective for you and also helps to reduce the likelihood of repeating tests that you have already had in the past. This information may also be used for research and planning, which will help us provide better healthcare overall. No personal, identifiable information apart from that which is described in this pamphlet, will leave the MSHC without your prior consent. If information is taken away, it will contain only a number without your name, date of birth, initials or any contact details. Individuals who carry out research must follow strict guidelines, and maintain the confidentiality of the information they access. There is a possibility that you may be asked to participate in Quality Improvement activities, clinical trials or research. Your participation in these projects is entirely voluntary. If you don't wish to take part, you don't have to. You will receive the best possible care whether or not you take part

Information is only made available for research projects which have been approved by the Ethics and Research Committee following thorough investigation and review.

HOW IS MY INFORMATION PROTECTED AND WHO HAS ACCESS TO IT?

CLINICAL STAFF

Information about you is stored in an electronic medical record which is stored securely onsite. Paper based medical records are stored securely onsite and/ or archived in secure offsite records facilities. Details such as your name, address, date of birth, telephone number as well as test results, diagnosis and treatment information are available, electronically, to healthcare professionals who are involved in your care. If you attend more than one hospital or clinic within Alfred Health, some electronic information about you will be made available to healthcare professionals at the other hospital.

You & Your Privacy



Again, this is necessary to ensure that you receive quality care and avoid duplication of tests and clinical assessments.

MSHC maintains strict policies with respect to who receives passwords and access to your personal information. All staff are bound by a strict code of conduct with respect to maintaining the confidentiality of your information.

YOUR LOCAL DOCTOR AND COMMUNITY BASED PROVIDERS

Sometimes your local doctor will write or telephone us for additional information about your treatment. In this situation, we routinely release information to the doctor. Information about you will be disclosed to community based providers that are involved in your care. This information may be shared electronically or by other methods such as phone, fax or mail. If, at any time, you do not wish for information to be shared for purposes directly related to your care, please advise the Medical Services Manager or Nursing Services Manager at Melbourne Sexual Health Centre via 9341 6200.

If you refuse disclosure of your health information to your local doctor or community-based providers, this may have an adverse affect on your health and ongoing care.

OTHER HOSPITALS OR NEW DOCTORS

If you are seen at a hospital outside Alfred Health or you see a new local doctor, in some instances they may contact us to obtain information about you so that they can treat you safely and effectively. In an emergency situation, we will release personal information about you to facilitate your care.

WE MAY CONTACT YOU AFTER YOU HAVE GONE HOME

At times a nurse or doctor may contact you after you have gone home to find out how you are or inform you of your test results.

OTHER PEOPLE WHO RECEIVE INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

If we are unable to contact you regarding your results, your contact details and specific medical information may be passed along to the Department of Health Partner Notification Officers so that they can communicate to you about your health and any follow up treatment which might be required.

In some circumstances, Alfred Health is obligated, by law, to release personal information about you. Examples of this include:

- Presentation of your medical record as evidence in court when subpoenaed (in case of legal action);
- We have to report notifiable diseases to the Department of Health (Victoria); and
- We have to report other demographic information about you to the Department of Health (Victoria) but for most infections your name, date of birth are not provided. (This information is essentially de-identified).

The Department of Health have strict policies relating to access and the use of information. Further details on the use of this information can be obtained from the Patient Liaison Officer, Alfred Health

CAN I HAVE ACCESS TO INFORMATION ABOUT ME?

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 1982, (Vic) and the Health Record Act 2001 (Vic), you have the right to request access to your medical record and personal information held by Alfred Health. If there is information in the record which is incorrect or you do not agree with, you have the right to request that it be corrected. Requests for access to your Alfred medical record can be made in writing to the Freedom of Information Officer, Clinical & Administrative Services, The Alfred, Commercial Road, Melbourne 3004.

A fee is charged for FOI requests. For Melbourne Sexual Health Centre contact the Medical or Nursing Services Manager via 9341 6200.

WHO DO I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?

If you have any questions regarding what happens to the information about you please contact the Patient Liaison Officer The Alfred on **9076 2000**, or the Medical or Nursing Services Manager Melbourne Sexual Health Centre on **9341 6200**.

You can also contact the Manager of Health Information Services at The Alfred, Caulfield, Sandringham or Melbourne Sexual Health Centre. Further information is available at www.alfred.org.au or www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc

HEALTH PRIVACY PRINCIPLES

Alfred Health supports and complies with the 11 Health Privacy Principles (HPPs) relating to health information under the Health Records Act 2001.

They are:

1. Collection
2. Use and Disclosure
3. Data Quality
4. Data Security and Data Retention
5. Openness
6. Access and Correction
7. Identifiers
8. Anonymity
9. Transborder Data Flows
10. Transfer or Closure of the Practice of a Health Service Provider
11. Making information available to another Health Service Provider



MSHC

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Part of AlfredHealth

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Updated: 10/08/2016