



www.paulhopkinsmedical.com.au

CALL: 07 4951 1311

FAX: 07 4953 1412

PO BOX 1103, MACKAY

MACKAY

29 BRISBANE STREET

brisbane@phmc.au

EAST MACKAY

17 SHAKESPEARE STREET

shakespeare@phmc.au

ANDERGROVE

68 CELEBER DRIVE

andergrove@phmc.au

## PRIVACY POLICY

Current as of: 03/2025

The objective of this privacy notice is to provide you, our patient, with clear information on how your personal information is collected and used within the practice. Occasionally we also need to share your personal information to involve others in your healthcare and this policy outlines when, how, and why we share your information.

### 1. Who can I contact about this policy?

For enquiries concerning this policy, you can contact any of our three clinics via the emails below:

- Brisbane Street clinic: brisbane@phmc.au
- Shakespeare Street clinic: shakespeare@phmc.au
- Celeber Drive clinic: andergrove@phmc.au

### 2. When and why is your consent necessary?

When you register as a patient of this practice, you provide consent for the GPs and practice staff to access and use your personal information to facilitate the delivery of healthcare. Access to your personal information is restricted to practice team members who require it for your care. If we ever use your personal information for purposes other than healthcare provision, we will obtain additional consent from you.

It is important to us that as our patient, you understand why we collect and use your personal information.

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

The practice collects, uses, stores, and shares your personal information primarily to manage your health safely and effectively. This includes providing healthcare services, managing medical records, and ensuring accurate billing and payments. Additionally, we may utilise your information for internal quality and safety improvement processes such as practice audits, accreditation purposes, and staff training to maintain high-quality service standards.

### 4. What personal information is collected?

The information we will collect about you includes your:

- names, date of birth, addresses, contact details
- medical information including medical history, medicines, allergies, and adverse reactions immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors
- Medicare number (where available) for identification and claiming purposes
- healthcare identifier numbers
- health fund details.

### 5. Can you deal with us anonymously?

We comply with The Privacy Act and that means we can provide you with the option to deal with us anonymously or under a pseudonym – in most cases in healthcare this would mean the care you are able to receive will be very limited. You can continue to deal with us like this unless it is unsafe or impracticable for us to do so or unless we are required or authorised by law to only deal with identified individuals.

There may be other consequences for patients if they do not identify themselves, such as not being able to be prescribed certain medications, for ongoing healthcare and the ability to claim a Medicare or health fund rebate.

### 6. How is personal information collected?

The practice may collect your personal information in several different ways:

When you make your first appointment, the practice team will collect your personal and demographic information via your registration.

We may also collect your personal information when you visit our website, send us an email or SMS, telephone us, make an online appointment, or communicate with us using social media.

In some circumstances, personal information may also be collected from other sources, including:

- 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 (if relevant).
- While providing medical services, further personal information may be collected via:
  - electronic prescribing
  - My Health Record
  - online appointments.

Various types of images may be collected and used, including:

- **CCTV footage:** Collected from our premises for security and safety purpose
- **Photos and medical images:** These can be taken using personal devices for medical purposes (with your consent), following the guidelines outlined in RACGP's guide on using personal devices for medical images.

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

We sometimes share your personal information:

- with third parties for business purposes, such as accreditation agencies or information technology providers – these third parties are required to comply with APPs and this policy
- with other healthcare providers (e.g. In referral letters)
- when it is required or authorised by law (e.g. 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 it is a statutory requirement to share certain personal information (e.g. some diseases require mandatory notification)
- When it is provision of medical services, through electronic prescribing, My Health Record (e.g. via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary).

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

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

## 8. Will your information be used for marketing purposes?

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

## 9. How is your information used to improve services?

The practice may use your personal information to improve the quality of the services offered to patients through research, analysis of patient data for quality improvement and for training activities with the practice team

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 reception staff know if you do not want your information included.

## 10. How are document automation technologies used?

Document automation is where systems use existing data to generate electronic documents relating to medical conditions and healthcare.

The practice uses document automation technologies to create documents such as referrals, which are sent to other healthcare providers. These documents contain only your relevant medical information.

These document automation technologies are used through secure medical software **Best Practice Software**. This medical software utilises document automation technologies so that documents drafted by us, such as referrals, disclose only your relevant medical information. These document automation technologies are established through the built-in word processor which allows Paul Hopkins Medical to set up automated, simple, and computed variables.

All users of the medical software have their own unique user credentials and password and can only access information that is relevant to their role in the practice team.

The practice complies with the Australian privacy legislation and APPs to protect your information. All data, both electronic and paper are stored and managed in accordance with the RACGP's Privacy and managing health information guide.

### **11. How are Artificial Intelligence (AI) Scribes used?**

Some of the doctors in our practice use an AI scribe tool to support GPs take notes during their consultations with you. The AI scribe uses an audio recording of your consultation to generate a clinical note for your health record. This AI scribe service:

- does/does not share information outside of Australia
- destroys/stores the audio file once the transcription is complete.
- removes/retains sensitive, personal identifying information as part of the transcription

The practice will only use data from our digital scribe service to enhance the healthcare provided to you. You have the option to opt out of AI scribe being used during your consultation.

### **12. How is your personal information stored and protected?**

The practice stores all personal information securely. Your personal information may be stored at our practice in various forms. These include paper records, electronic records, visual (X-rays, CT scans, videos, and photos), and audio recordings.

We choose to store and protect your personal information in a protected electronic information system due to its anti-virus systems.

Our electronic system is protected by the use of unique passwords available only to Paul Hopkins authorized staff members and by a regular backup system. Our hard copy files are kept in secure lockable environments available only to authorized staff. Our staff are bound by individual confidentiality agreements for staff as are any contractors.

Our website information and data collected is protected by Wix & Automed Systems. Our website is regularly updated and revised. All of our electronic systems are protected with advanced virus protection. The practice has CCTV for security purposes, CCTV is only used in public area's such as the externals of the building, the waiting rooms and corridors and the reception area.

### **13. How can you access and correct your personal information at the practice?**

You have the right to request access to, and correction of, your personal information. The practice acknowledges patients may request access to their medical records. We require you to put this request in writing using our custom form. Please ask our staff for a Transfer/Access Medical Records form and our practice will respond within a reasonable time.

Our practice will take reasonable steps to correct your personal information where the information is not accurate or up-to-date. We will regularly 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, and you should make such requests in writing. Please ask our staff for an update of patient details form.

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

At Paul Hopkins Medical Clinic we are dedicated to the best care of our patients and we take complaints seriously. Our preference is to resolve any issue's in the shortest possible time frame.

If you have a complaint or you have any privacy concerns you can advise us in the following ways:

You can talk to your Doctor or our Practice Manager, or you can make a complaint in writing.

You can contact us via phone, post or email:

Phone: 0749511311

Post: PO Box 1103, Mackay Qld, 4740

You may also contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) who investigates complaints regarding the APPs (Australian Privacy Principles). Generally, the OAIC will require you to give them time to respond before they will investigate. There are two sections located on the OAIC website (<https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-complaints>) in the 'How To' section which can help direct your complaint. For further information visit or call the OAIC on 1300 363 992.

If you do not feel we have resolved your issue You may also contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner. The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner will require you to give them time to respond before they investigate. For further information visit [www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au) or call the OAIC (Office of the Australian Information Commissioner) on 1300 363 992.

#### **15. How is privacy on the website maintained?**

At Paul Hopkins Medical, any personal information you share with us through website, email, and social media, is handled securely and confidentially. This practice uses analytics and cookies.

#### **16. Policy review statement**

Our privacy policy is regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with current obligations.

If any changes are made:

- They will be reflected on the website.
- Significant changes may be communicated directly to patients via email or other means.

Please check the policy periodically for updates. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us.