

The Practitioners and staff of the Adelaide Eye and Retina Centre are committed to providing you with the best possible care and support. For this reason, on becoming a patient in this practice we will ask you for some highly personal information which will be recorded and stored in a file created for you.

It is important for you to understand how your co-operation in providing this personal information enables the care process to be effective and give you the best possible outcomes. With this in mind, we are committed to protecting your privacy in line with National Privacy Principles, of which a copy is available upon request.

This policy is in place for all parties involved in the collection, storage and use of this information and we are all obligated to abide by the conditions of this agreement.

Information Collection

We collect information that is necessary and relevant to provide you with medical care and treatment, and manage our medical practice. The following information is required to ensure you are provided the best care possible:

- **Your full legal name, date of birth, residential and postal address and telephone numbers** - These details are crucial for correct identification of each person and relevant to questions that may arise about care and treatment, appointment scheduling and for communication purposes. We also need to keep addresses and telephone details current for reminders if necessary.
- **Your Medical History (which will be taken by the Ophthalmic Assistant)** - Details about existing medical conditions, including any known allergies, prescribed and non-prescribed medications, and allied health care options. This information is essential in determining your care and outcomes.
- **Medicare Number and Health Fund details** - These details are required for accounting purposes. Any concession details such as Pension Card

number or Veterans Affairs number are required for claiming concession benefits where applicable.

- **Referring practitioner's name and address and telephone numbers -** Regardless if you were referred by your GP, another Medical Specialist or an Optometrist, this information is required to communicate with your referring practitioner about your care and also to ensure you receive a rebate for MBS items covered by Medicare.

In emergency situations we may also need to collect information from your relatives or friends.

We may be required by law to retain medical records for certain periods of time depending on your age at the time we provide services.

Use and Disclosure

We will treat your personal information as strictly private and confidential. We will only use or disclose it for purposes directly related to your care and treatment, or in ways that you would reasonably expect that we may use it for your ongoing care and treatment. For example, the disclosure of blood test results to your specialist or requests for x-rays.

There are circumstances where we may be permitted or required by law to disclose your personal information to third parties. For example, to Medicare, Police, insurers, solicitors, government regulatory bodies, tribunals, courts of law, hospitals, debt collection agents, the electronic transfer of prescriptions service or to the Myhealth record system. We may also from time to time provide statistical data to third parties for research purposes.

We may disclose information about you to outside contractors to carry out activities on our behalf such as an IT service provider, solicitor or debt collection agent. We impose security and confidentiality requirements on how they handle your personal information. Outside contractors are required not to use information about you for any purpose except for those activities we have asked them to perform.

Data Quality and Security

We will take reasonable steps to ensure that your personal information is accurate, complete, up to date and relevant. For this purpose our staff may ask you to confirm that your contact details are correct when you attend a consultation. We request that you let us know if any of the information we hold about you is incorrect or out of date.

Personal information that we hold is protected by:

- securing our premises;
- placing passwords and varying access levels on databases to limit access and protect electronic information from unauthorised interference, access, modification and disclosure; and
- providing locked cabinets and rooms for the storage of physical records.

Corrections

If you believe that the information we have about you is not accurate, complete or up to date, we ask that you contact us in writing (see details below).

Access

You are entitled to request access to your medical records. We request that you put your request in writing and we will respond to it within a reasonable time.

There may be a fee for the administrative costs of retrieving and providing you with copies of your medical records.

We may deny access to your medical records in certain circumstances permitted by law, for example, if disclosure may cause a serious threat to your health or safety. We will always tell you why access is denied and the options you have to respond to our decision.

Complaints

If you have a complaint about the privacy of your personal information (including complaints about our use of the Myhealth record system), we request that you contact us in writing. Upon receipt of a complaint we will consider the details and attempt to resolve it in accordance with our complaints handling procedures.

If you are dissatisfied with our handling of a complaint or the outcome you may make an application to the Australian Information Commissioner or the Privacy Commissioner in your State or Territory.

Overseas Transfer of Data

We will not transfer your personal information to an overseas recipient unless we have your consent or we are required to do so by law.

Contact

Please direct any queries, complaints, requests for access to medical records to:

**The Office Manager
Adelaide Eye and Retina Centre,
18 North Terrace, Adelaide, 5000**