



GWANDALAN SUMMERLAND MEDICAL CENTRE

POLICIES

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

AT GWANDALAN SUMMERLAND MEDICAL WE HAVE ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VERBAL AND PHYSICAL ABUSE OF OUR RECEPTION, NURSING AND GP STAFF

IF YOU BEHAVE IN AN ABUSIVE WAY YOU WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE AND NO LONGER OFFERED APPOINTMENTS AT OUR CLINIC.

EMAIL POLICY

Emails are monitored by our reception staff.

Please be advised that all emails will be responded to within 2 business days.

For anything requiring urgent attention please phone the surgery directly on 4972 5564

RESULTS, REPORTS AND CLINICAL CORRESPONDENCE

Practice policy

All tests and results (including pathology results, diagnostic imaging reports, investigation reports and clinical correspondence received) must be reviewed, indicated with an action statement and acted on in a timely manner by the GP and incorporated into the patient health record.

Our practice has a system in place to follow up tests and results, reports and clinical correspondence where there is concern about the significance of the test or result. This also includes tests or referrals ordered for the patient. This forms part of our **Recall and Reminder system**.

In our practice it is the GP's responsibility to identify and flag patients of concern.

Practice procedure

Our practice manages incoming pathology results, diagnostic imaging reports, investigation reports and clinical correspondence by mail and downloading of results on our Computer System. Our patients are advised of the usual policy for notification of results and other correspondence. This is through:

- The GP and clinical staff verbally informing patients at the time of request
- The practice information sheet

RECALL AND REMINDER SYSTEMS

Gwandalan Summerland Medical coordinates a structured recall and reminder system. We aim to provide patients with the safety and comfort of knowing that their doctor is monitoring their health from a distance by issuing reminders for follow up or preventive care and recalling them to discuss results of test requests and referrals.

This helps to achieve:

- Continuity of care
- An increase in patient involvement in their health
- Better management of chronic conditions therefore leading to reduced acute care and greater preventive care to help patients achieve a better quality of life.

RECALL SYSTEM

Practice policy

Our recall system is a follow-up process whereby patients are contacted to return to our practice generally to receive the results of ordered tests or to receive follow-up treatment. Our recall system is considered an essential component of quality care and also offers an active risk management approach.

Recalls occur when it is crucial for a patient to attend the practice, usually in the instance of an abnormal test result, correspondence from a Specialist or other Health Professional, or patient failing to attend a specialist appointment.

- All test results or referral responses arrive at our practice and are checked by the GP
- Investigations or correspondence marked for recall by the GP will appear in the "Follow up actions from inbox" log on Best Practice and will then appear on the HotDoc Recalls where all text messages are sent, recorded and logged into the patient file automatically, as well as calls and letters.
- Recalls are flagged by the Doctor in order of priority, i.e. Urgent, non-urgent, reception to advise, doctor to advise, nurse to advise or send routine reminder.

- If a recall is marked as “urgent” this generally means within the next 24 hours. Our Doctors will advise our reception staff of urgent recalls and of the time frame to be seen, i.e. come straight in, to be seen that day or within the next 24 hours.
- The GP will usually write a comment next to the recall if they would like further action to be taken.
- The patient will be attempted to be contacted for 3 consecutive days, if there is no response. If the patient has not responded within 3 days, a letter will be sent to the patient.

After 14 days, if the patient has not contacted the surgery for an appointment, the recalling doctor is advised, and the patient can be marked on BP as “contacted”.

INTRODUCTION

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

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.

WHY DO WE COLLECT, USE, HOLD AND SHARE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION?

Our practice collects personal information to provide healthcare services to you. The main purposes for collecting, using, holding and sharing your personal information are to manage your health and for directly related business activities, such as financial claims and payments, practice audits and accreditation, and business processes (e.g., staff training).

DEFINITION – HEALTH RECORD

A health record refers to any information, whether written, electronic or verbal, that relates to a patient’s health, medical history, or care provided by our practice. This includes details such as personal information, medical conditions, treatments, medications, test results, and correspondence with other healthcare providers.

Health records are maintained to ensure continuity of care, support clinical decision-making, and meet legal and professional requirements for medical documentation.

USE OF DOCUMENT AUTOMATION TECHNOLOGIES

Our practice uses secure document automation systems to assist clinicians in preparing referral letters and other medical correspondence. These technologies are designed to ensure that only information relevant to the patient’s current care and the purpose of the referral is included.

This approach helps maintain accuracy and efficiency while protecting patient privacy by excluding unrelated or unnecessary details. All referral documents generated through these systems are reviewed and authorised by the treating doctor before being sent to the receiving healthcare provider. This ensures the information shared is appropriate, accurate, and compliant with the Australian Privacy Principles and relevant healthcare privacy legislation.

Telehealth and audio/visual consultations: Gwandalan Summerland Medical does not record telehealth or any other audio/visual consultations. Only information documented in your health record (e.g., consultation notes, prescriptions) is retained.

WHAT PERSONAL INFORMATION DO WE COLLECT?

The information we collect about you may include:

- 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

DEALING WITH US ANONYMOUSLY

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 authorised by law to only deal with identified individuals.

HOW DO WE COLLECT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION?

Our practice may collect your personal information in several ways:

- When you make your first appointment, our practice staff will collect your personal and demographic information via your registration.
- During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information.
- Information may also be collected through electronic transfer of prescriptions (eRX), My Health Record (e.g., Shared Health Summary, Event Summary).
- 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 via social media.
- In some circumstances, personal information may be collected from other sources, such as:
 - Your guardian or responsible person
 - Other healthcare providers (specialists, allied health professionals, hospitals, community health services, pathology and diagnostic imaging services)
 - Your health fund, Medicare, or the Department of Veterans' Affairs

WHEN, WHY AND WITH WHOM DO WE SHARE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION?

We may share your personal information:

- With third parties who work with our practice for business purposes (e.g., accreditation agencies, IT providers) – these third parties are required to comply with APPs and this policy
- With other healthcare providers
- When required or authorised by law (e.g., court subpoenas)

- When necessary to prevent a serious threat to a patient's or public health or safety, or when impractical to obtain consent
- To assist in locating a missing person
- To establish, exercise or defend an equitable claim
- For the purpose of confidential dispute resolution
- When there is a statutory requirement to share certain personal information (e.g., mandatory disease notifications)
- During the course of providing medical services through eRX, My Health Record (e.g., Shared Health Summary, Event Summary)

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

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

Our practice will not use your personal information for direct marketing without your express consent. You may opt out at any time by notifying our practice in writing.

HOW DO WE STORE AND PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION?

Your personal information may be stored in various forms, including paper records, electronic records, and visual records (X-rays, CT scans, videos, photos). Paper records are imported into Best Practice and destroyed via shredding.

Gwandalan Summerland Medical securely stores all personal information using encrypted electronic formats, password-protected systems, secure cabinets, and confidentiality agreements for staff and contractors.

HOW CAN YOU ACCESS AND CORRECT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION?

You have the right to request access to and correction of your personal information. Requests must be in writing and include details to identify the patient and the requesting practice. We aim to release medical records within 10–14 business days, including postage time.

Our practice takes reasonable steps to correct information that is inaccurate or out of date and may ask you periodically to verify your personal information.

HOW CAN YOU LODGE A PRIVACY-RELATED COMPLAINT, AND HOW WILL IT BE HANDLED?

Privacy complaints should be submitted in writing to:

Gwandalan Summerland Medical

4/50 Parraweena Road

Gwandalan NSW 2259

Ph: 4972 5564

Complaints are reviewed personally by the business owners, with a usual turnaround of up to 30 days. You may also contact the **OAIC** (www.oaic.gov.au or 1300 363 992).

Policy review statement

This privacy policy is reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with any changes. Patients will be notified of amendments via information sheets and posters in the waiting room.

Disclaimer

This template is a general guide and may not address all circumstances. While adapted for general practice, it does not ensure compliance with privacy laws or guarantee discharge of

duty of care. The RACGP disclaims all liability for any loss, damage, cost, or expense arising from reliance on this template.