



## Cairns Health Collective Privacy Policy

Current as of: 11/07/2025

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### Introduction

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

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### Why and when your consent is necessary

When you register as a patient of our practice, you provide consent for the Medical Practitioners and staff at CHC to access and use your personal information so they can provide you with the best possible healthcare. Only staff who need to see your information will access it. If we need to use your information for any other purpose, we will seek your additional consent.

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

CHC collects your personal information primarily to provide healthcare services. We may also use it for directly related business activities, including billing, Medicare claims, audits, accreditation, and staff training.

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## What personal information do we collect?

We collect the following information:

- Names, date of birth, addresses, and contact details
  - Medical history, medications, allergies, immunisations, family and social history, and risk factors
  - Medicare number (where applicable)
  - Healthcare identifiers
  - Private health fund details
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## Dealing with us anonymously

You have the right to deal with us anonymously or under a pseudonym unless it is impractical or unlawful for us to do so.

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## How do we collect your personal information?

We may collect personal information:

1. During your registration process
  2. During medical consultations, including via electronic systems like My Health Record, ETP, e-referrals, and Shared Health Summaries
  3. Through communication via phone, SMS, email, our website, or online appointment bookings
  4. From other sources when required, such as:
    - Your authorised representative
    - Other healthcare providers (e.g. specialists, hospitals, pathology)
    - Medicare, Department of Veterans' Affairs, or health insurers
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## When, why and with whom do we share your personal information?

We may share your information:

- With third parties for business operations (e.g. IT providers, accreditation bodies) under confidentiality agreements
- With other healthcare providers involved in your care
- When legally required (e.g. subpoenas, notifiable diseases)
- When there is a serious threat to life, health, or safety
- For confidential dispute resolution
- For de-identified research or medical training purposes

We do not disclose your information overseas unless legally required or with your consent. CHC does not record audio/video consultations without your express permission (and we currently do not use such technology).

We will never use your personal information for marketing without your explicit consent. You may opt out of marketing communications at any time by contacting us in writing.

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## How do we store and protect your personal information?

All patient records are securely stored on password-protected electronic systems hosted in Australia. Paper documents are promptly digitised and securely destroyed.

Access to personal information is restricted to authorised personnel. All staff are bound by confidentiality agreements as a condition of employment.

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## Privacy and Electronic Communication

### Emails

Patient information is only sent via encrypted email systems, with patient consent.

#### Email disclaimer:

This communication is confidential and intended only for the recipient. If received in error, please contact Cairns Health Collective and delete the message.

Note: Email is not suitable for clinical or urgent matters, as it is monitored by administrative staff only. We discourage the use of email for patient communication.

## Fax

CHC uses secure fax-to-email services for transmitting and receiving faxes.

Fax/email disclaimer:

This communication is confidential. If received in error, please notify the sender and delete the correspondence.

## Electronic Correspondence

We use secure platforms (e.g. Medical-Objects, HealthLink) for electronic health communications such as referrals and specialist letters.

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## Website and Cookies

Our website may use cookies to enhance the user experience. You can disable cookies through your browser settings. External links on our website are not covered by this policy; please consult the privacy policies of those third parties.

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## Retention of Health Information

Health records are retained for a minimum of 7 years from the last entry date. For minors, records are kept until the patient turns or would have turned 25. Information that no longer needs to be retained is securely destroyed.

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## Accessing and correcting your information

You have the right to access and request correction of your personal information. Please submit your request in writing to the Practice Manager. We aim to respond within 7 working days.

We regularly review your information to ensure accuracy and may ask you to confirm details during visits.

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## Making a Privacy Complaint

We take privacy concerns seriously. Please direct written complaints to:

Practice Manager  
Cairns Health Collective  
447 Draper Street,  
Parramatta Park, Qld 4870

We aim to respond within 14 business days.

You can also contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC):

Website: [www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au)

Phone: 1300 363 992

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## Policy Review Statement

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as needed. The current version is available on our website and in the clinic waiting area.