

Victoria Tower Medical Privacy Policy

1. Introduction

At Victoria Tower Medical, protecting your privacy and the confidentiality of your personal health information is our priority. This Privacy Policy details how we collect, use, store, and disclose your information in line with the *Privacy Act 1988*, the *Australian Privacy Principles (APPs)*, and other relevant legislation.

We treat all patient information as strictly private and confidential, respecting every patient's rights. Our practice adheres to the *Privacy Act 1988*, the *Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012*, and the *RACGP's Privacy and Managing Health Information in General Practice* guidelines, ensuring meticulous handling of your health information.

Under no circumstances will practice staff discuss or disclose patient information to unauthorized individuals, including family, friends, or other staff, inside or outside the practice. This includes all documents such as referral letters, patient accounts, or clinical records. Breaches of confidentiality are taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action or dismissal.

All team members are trained on the Privacy Policy, sign a confidentiality agreement upon employment, and reaffirm their commitment during induction. This agreement remains binding even after employment ends.

Our commitment is to handle your health information with the utmost professionalism and care to maintain your trust.

2. Collection of Personal Information

We collect only the information necessary to deliver high-quality healthcare services, which may include:

- Personal details (e.g., name, address, contact details, date of birth, gender, marital status).
- Medicare and private health insurance information.
- Medical history, test results, and treatment plans.
- Lifestyle or personal habits impacting your health.

Collection Methods:

- Directly from you (in person, via phone, email, or our website).
- From third-party providers involved in your care (with your consent).
- Through secure electronic communication systems.

We will always seek your consent before collecting information from third parties unless it is unreasonable or impractical to do so.

3. Use and Disclosure of Personal Information

Your information is used strictly for purposes related to your healthcare, including:

- Diagnosing and treating medical conditions.
- Managing medical records and care plans.
- Communicating about appointments or treatment plans.
- Processing Medicare and private health insurance claims.
- Coordinating referrals to other healthcare providers.
- Fulfilling legal, regulatory, and accreditation requirements.

Disclosure to Third Parties:

We may share your information with:

- Healthcare providers directly involved in your care.
- Diagnostic services (e.g., pathology or imaging).
- Government agencies as required by law.
- Approved researchers using de-identified data (unless explicit consent is provided).

4. Secondary Purpose Use and Disclosure

Your information may also be used for:

- Administrative purposes, audits, and quality improvement.
- Resolving complaints and handling disputes.
- Accreditation and compliance processes.

Your Rights:

You have the right to refuse the use of your information for these secondary purposes, and your decision will be respected.

5. Consent and Opting Out

On your first visit, you will complete a *New Patient Information Form* consenting to the use and sharing of your health information. You may withdraw or update your consent anytime by contacting us, and your preferences will be recorded in your file.

6. Accessing and Updating Personal Information

You have the right to access and correct your information. To request this:

- Contact us directly.
- Access will be provided within a reasonable timeframe, and any inaccuracies corrected promptly.

In certain circumstances, access may be restricted as permitted by law, with reasons provided.

7. Storage and Security of Your Information

We take reasonable steps to ensure your information is secure, including:

- Using encrypted and access-controlled electronic systems.
- Securing physical records in locked filing systems.
- Conducting regular staff training and security audits.

8. Retention of Personal Information

Your information will be retained as required to:

- Provide healthcare services.
- Meet legal and regulatory obligations.
- Manage financial and audit records.

When no longer needed, information will be securely destroyed or permanently de-identified.

9. Privacy Policy Updates

This policy is reviewed periodically to reflect changes in laws, technologies, or practices. The latest version is available:

- In our waiting room.
- On our website.

10. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

We employ AI technologies responsibly to enhance healthcare delivery, adhering to the *Privacy Act 1988* and the APPs.

Applications:

- Appointment scheduling and reminders.
- Clinical research and data analysis.
- Administrative support (e.g., billing and Medicare claims).
- Assisting clinical decisions.

Data Handling:



- De-identified data is prioritized to safeguard privacy.
- AI systems comply with stringent security protocols.

Transparency and Oversight:

- Patients are informed about AI usage.
- AI-supported decisions are reviewed by qualified professionals.

11. Contact Us

For questions, concerns, or complaints regarding privacy, contact:

Privacy Officer

Victoria Tower Medical

36-38 Victoria Street East, Burwood NSW 2134

Phone: 02 8322 9000

Email: reception@vtm.com.au

We are committed to addressing your concerns promptly and respectfully.