

Keeping your personal information private in our practice

Purpose

This pamphlet explains how personal information about you and your health is recorded and managed in our practices. We also have a written privacy policy describing how we manage personal information. You can receive a copy of our policy free of charge upon request or access it via our practice website at www.hspgroup.co.za

Personal information

The 'personal information' we collect includes your name, date of birth, address/es, contact details, Medical aid number, healthcare identifiers and health fund details. Medical information may include medical history and any care you may need. Doctors and nurses need information about your past and present health in order to provide you with high-quality care.

Our practices follow best practice and have been aligned within the SA Constitution and POPI Act for the management of health information in general practice, which requires that your personal information is kept private and secure.

Your medical records

This practice takes steps to ensure that your medical records:

- are accurate, complete, well-organised and legible
- are up-to-date
- contain enough information to allow another medical practitioner to care for you
- contain a summary of your care
- can be used to remind you, with your permission, to return for follow up, check-ups and reviews.

If you are uncertain why information is being requested, please ask the practice staff.

If you wish to remain anonymous while accessing healthcare services, please talk to the practice staff.

Providing your information to other GPs

In this practice, it is normal for all Practitioners to have access to your medical records. If you have any concerns about this please discuss them with your practice staff.

It is important that other people involved in your care, such as medical specialists and other healthcare professionals, are informed of the relevant parts of your medical history, so they can provide the best care for you. Your Practitioner will let you know when this is necessary.

Providing your information to others

Medical Staff respect your right to decide how your personal information is used or shared. For example, this may be sharing your health information with GPs, Audiologists, specialist doctors, etc. Personal information that identifies you will only be sent to other people with your consent, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Gaining your consent is the guiding principle used by this practice in using and sharing your information.

Our practice will not share your personal health information with anyone else or another organisation unless:

- you have consented to this sharing, (please note that you have consented for us to disclose work related health information with your employer), or
- it is your right to give access to whoever you wish, however you will be required to sign a specific consent to disclosure consent of medical records to a third party, or
- they are legally obliged to disclose the information, in which case your Practitioner will first discuss with you the information that she or he is legally obliged to disclose, or
- the information is necessary for you to obtain Medical aid payments or other health insurance rebates, or
- there is an overriding public health and safety interest in the release of the information.

In the above cases, only information necessary to meet the requirements will be provided. Your health information will not ordinarily be sent overseas unless:

- you are informed and provide consent for this to occur, and
- the overseas country receiving the information has privacy laws that are very similar to the POPI Act.

As often as possible, we do prefer to release medical information to you, in your hands, to hand over to whoever might request or require the confidential information.

Using health information for quality improvement and research

This practice may use patient health information to assist in improving the quality of care we give to all our patients, by reviewing the treatments used in the practice.

Your information held by the practice may be used in research projects to improve healthcare in the community; however, this information will not include data that can identify you.

The information used for research, including the publication of research results, will not be in a form that would allow you to be identified, unless the research serves an important public interest and we are forced to disclose this information in accordance with South African law. . In such cases, identifiable medical records can be used for medical research without your consent under guidelines issued by the Government. Before providing such identified information, your Practitioner will discuss with you the information that she or he is obliged to disclose.

Security of information in the practice

South African and Medical privacy legislation applies to all personal health information recorded in electronic and paper records. All records must be kept secure to protect against unauthorised access. This practice complies with these requirements to protect your information.

Access to your health information

You may ask practice staff about any aspect of your healthcare, including information contained in your record. You can request access to your medical record and any other information the practice records about you.

If you request access to your medical record, your Practitioner will need to consider if there may be a risk of physical or mental harm to you or any other person that may result from disclosure of your health information. Your Practitioner may need to remove any information that will affect the privacy of other individuals.

Sharing information is important for good communication between you and practice staff. Your Practitioner is able to provide a full explanation of the health summary or medical record you are provided access to.

Depending on what is involved, you may be asked to contribute to the cost of providing the information.

Direct marketing

This practice does not engage in direct marketing, but will send reminders to the patient and his employer from time to time.

Resolving concerns regarding the privacy of your health information

If you have any concerns regarding the privacy of your personal health information or the accuracy of the information held by the practice, you should discuss these with practice staff. Inaccurate information can be corrected or your concerns noted in your record. For legal reasons, the original notes will be retained.

Contacts

If you have questions or a complaint about the privacy of your personal information, please speak to the practice manager or email us at info@hspgroup.co.za

Legislation contemplated in our policy is:

Section 14 of the Constitution of South Africa 1996

POPI Act

As well as principles of best practice.

Practice contact details –

HSP Group SA
Occupational Health Specialists.

Tel: 0861 873 477
www.hspgroup.co.za