Privacy, Personal Health Information and Your Rights

This information sheet explains what Personal Health Information is and how your information is used, recorded and managed at Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services (Winnunga). It also describes when, how, and why we might share your information.

WHAT IS PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION?

Information that is about your health and that identifies you if someone reads it is called “personal health information”. It includes your past, present and any planned future medical or health care.

YOUR CONSENT

When you register as a patient of this practice, you provide consent for GPs and clinical staff to access and use your personal information to manage your healthcare. Access to your personal information is restricted to practice team members who require it for your care.

If we use your personal information for purposes other than healthcare provision, we will obtain additional consent from you.

WHY IS THIS INFORMATION COLLECTED?

Winnunga needs information about your past and present health to make sure you get the best care possible. This includes providing healthcare services, managing medical records, and ensuring accurate billing and payments. Additionally, we may utilise your information for internal quality and safety improvement processes such as practice audits, accreditation purposes, and staff training to maintain high-quality service standards.

WHAT PERSONAL INFORMATION IS COLLECTED?

The information we will collect about you includes your:

- Name, date of birth, address, contact details, sex and gender
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-identification status
- Confirmation of Aboriginality if required
- Medical information including medical history, medicines, allergies, adverse reactions immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors
- Medicare number and health care card number
- Healthcare identifier numbers

HOW IS PERSONAL INFORMATION COLLECTED?

When you first visit Winnunga we will collect your personal and demographic information on registration. We may also collect your personal information when you telephone us.

Winnunga will regularly ask you to confirm your personal information, to make sure what information we have on file is correct and up to date.

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Personal information may also be collected from:

- Your guardian or responsible person.
- Other healthcare providers, such as specialists, allied health professionals, hospitals, community health services, and pathology and diagnostic imaging services.
- Medicare, or the Department of Veterans' Affairs (if relevant).
- Prescription monitoring systems
- My Health Record

Images may be collected on CCTV footage recorded from our premises for security and safety purposes. Photos and videos may be taken at Winnunga events or groups.

HOW IS PERSONAL INFORMATION STORED AND PROTECTED?

We have systems in place keep your personal information safe, secure and private.

Your personal information is stored electronically in our clinical information system, Communicare. Your electronic health record can only be accessed by workers that Winnunga has authorised. Both the computers and the software your record is contained in are password protected. Our IT processes ensure the security of your information from viruses, ransomware and malware (hacking etc).

Some information may also be stored as paper records or visual records (e.g., X-rays, CT scans, videos, and photos). Hard copy documents are kept in locked cabinets and/or in locked offices which can only be accessed by authorised workers. When not needed anymore they are archived in a secure facility and destroyed after a certain period of time.

PROVIDING YOUR INFORMATION TO OTHERS

We may share your personal information:

- With other healthcare providers (e.g. in referral letters)
- When providing medical services (e.g. electronic prescribing, immunisation and cancer registers)
- When the information is needed for Medicare payments or other health insurance rebates

We may share your information without your consent:

- When it is required or authorised by law (e.g. court subpoenas)
- If you are at risk of harm and cannot give consent (e.g. you are unconscious and need treatment)
- If the information relates to the safety, welfare or well-being of a child or young person
- When it is a statutory requirement (e.g. mandatory notifiable disease reporting)
- To assist in locating a missing person
- For the purpose of confidential dispute resolution process
- With third parties for business purposes, such as accreditation agencies or information technology providers – these third parties must comply with privacy requirements.

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

We do not share your personal information with anyone outside Australia (unless under exceptional circumstances that are permitted by law) without your consent.

INFORMATION THAT DOES NOT IDENTIFY ME

Sometimes it is necessary for Winnunga to use information that has been de-identified. De-identified means that no-one will in any way be able to identify a particular person. De-identified information could be used for research or reporting to government.

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Winnunga does not allow any research to be done that has not met very strict guidelines. It then must be approved by Winnunga's Board of Directors.

CAN I ACCESS MY PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION?

Yes. Everyone has the right to request access their own Personal Health Information. Ask your doctor, nurse or Aboriginal Health Worker about this. You may also request we correct or update your information. To do this please contact the Practice Manager on 02 6284 6222.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

- You have the right to know when information about you is sent to another person, for example we will always ask your permission to refer you to a specialist.
- You have the right to tell us if you don't want a particular doctor, nurse or health worker involved in your health care.
- You have the right to ask us not to include your information for data collection or research.
- You have the right to ask your doctor to see your medical records.
- You have the right to raise any concerns or complaints you may have in respect to the privacy of your Personal Health Information.

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT PRIVACY AND YOUR RIGHTS

For further information on Privacy Legislation, or if you wish to make a complaint, please ask for the Practice Manager, or call 02 6284 6222.

Alternatively, you may contact the ACT Human Rights Commission on 02 6205 2222 or HRCIntake@act.gov.au

We take complaints and concerns regarding privacy seriously. You should express any privacy concerns you may have. We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with the resolution procedure.

If you do not feel we have resolved your issue, you may also contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner. The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner will require you to give them time to respond before they investigate. For further information visit www.oaic.gov.au or call the OAIC (Office of the Australian Information Commissioner) on 1300 363 992.

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