

Port Lincoln Aboriginal Health Service

Privacy Policy

PLAHS is committed to protecting the privacy of client information and to handling your personal information in a responsible manner and in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012, and the Australian Privacy Principles.

This Privacy Policy explains how we collect, use and disclose your personal information, how you may access that information and how you may seek the correction of any information. It also explains how you may make a complaint about a breach of privacy legislation.

This Privacy Policy is current from August 2014. From time to time we may make changes to our policy, processes and systems in relation to how we handle your personal information. We will update this Privacy Policy to reflect any changes. Those changes will be available to you at any time in the practice or on our web-site (www.plahs.org.au).

All staff, visiting health professionals, information support contractors and researchers must be

- trained in the application of this policy and*
- are required to sign confidentiality agreements*

Collection and storage of your information

PLAHS collect information that is necessary and relevant to provide you with medical care and treatment, and to manage our service. This information will nearly always be stored on our computer system but paper copies of some medical results or forms may also be stored.

This information may include your name, address, date of birth, gender, general health information, family history, and contact details. It may also include sensitive personal or health information. Any sensitive information is only available to those staff that directly need the information to provide you with adequate care.

We will take reasonable steps to ensure that your personal information is accurate, complete, up to date and relevant. For this purpose, our staff may ask you to confirm that your contact details are correct when you attend an appointment. We request that you let us know if any of the information we hold about you is incorrect or out of date.

Personal information that we hold is protected by:

- securing our premises;*
- placing passwords and varying access levels on our clinical software to limit access and to protect electronic information from unauthorised interference, access, modification and disclosure; and*
- storing paper files in area not accessible to unauthorised personnel.*

Wherever practicable we will only collect information from you personally. However, we may also need to collect information from other sources such as treating specialists, radiologists, pathologists, hospitals and other health care providers.

We collect information in various ways, such as over the phone, in writing, or in person. Depending on the type of information, medical or non-medical staff may collect the information from you. In emergency situations we may also need to collect information from your relatives or friends.

We are required by law to retain medical records for certain periods of time depending on your age at the time we provide services.

Use and disclosure of your information

We will treat your personal information as strictly private and confidential. We will only use or disclose it for purposes directly related to your care and treatment, or in ways that you would reasonably expect to ensure your ongoing care and treatment. For example, the disclosure of blood test results to your specialist or requests for x-rays. If third parties such as Work Cover, request your information we will never send your information without a current signed release from you to do so. We will not share

any of your information with external researchers without your written permission. We will not disclose any of your information to any overseas country.

There are, however circumstances where we may be permitted or required by law to disclose your personal information to third parties e.g. to Medicare, courts of law, or hospitals.

We may also from time to time provide deidentified statistical data to our funding bodies as required by our contracts with them.

Correcting incorrect information

If you believe that the information we have about you is not accurate, complete or up-to-date, we ask that you discuss this matter with your doctor or the Manager of Client Services (Angela Dufek) or contact us in writing. Please mark the envelope as 'CONFIDENTIAL'

Manager of Client Services
PLAHS
PO Box 1583
Port Lincoln SA 5606

Access to your information

You are entitled to request access to your clinical records. We request that you put your request in writing as per above address (or speak to the Manager of Client Services) and we will respond to your request within a reasonable time. There may be a fee for the administrative costs of retrieving and providing you with copies of your medical records.

We may deny you access to your medical records in certain circumstances permitted by law, for example, if disclosure may cause a serious threat to yours or someone else's health or safety.

We will always tell you why access is denied and the options you have to respond to our decision.

Complaints about your privacy or confidentiality

If you have a complaint about the privacy of your personal information, we request that you contact our Chief Executive Officer in writing or by phone or by using the complaints form available in reception. Upon receipt of a complaint we will consider the details and attempt to resolve it in accordance with our complaints handling procedures.

If you are dissatisfied with our handling of a complaint or the outcome you may make an application to the:

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
Telephone: 1300 363 992
Email: enquiries@oaic.gov.au
GPO Box 2999
Canberra, ACT 2601