

# How Melbourne Health is protecting your privacy

## Summary Points to Remember

- We collect personal information so that we can provide you with appropriate treatment
- We comply with laws governing the collection, use and disclosure of patient information
- You have the right to refuse disclosure of your information to providers outside the Parkville Precinct
- Your medical record will usually be destroyed 15 years after your last visit
- You can gain access to your medical record via Freedom of Information

## What information does Melbourne Health collect about you?

Melbourne Health collects information such as your name, address and contact details, as well as information about your health problems and the treatment you are given. New information may be added to your record every time you attend or have contact with Melbourne Health.

## Why do we collect your information and what do we use it for?

### Patient Care

We collect and maintain personal and medical information in order to provide you with appropriate care and treatment. Your medical record will enable those staff at Melbourne Health (**MH**), the Royal Children's Hospital (**RCH**), Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre (**PMCC**) and The Royal Women's Hospital (**The Women's**) involved in your care to have access to your medical history.

A joint collaboration between MH, RCH, PMCC, and The Women's (**the Parkville Precinct**) will see the creation of a shared Electronic Medical Record (**EMR**) system. The RCH has had an EMR since 2016, with MH Emergency Department to use the EMR from 30 June 2019. The EMR will extend to include the rest of MH, PMCC and The Women's from 2 May 2020.



This will give those staff involved in your care and working from these hospitals access to information they need to enable safer, integrated and more streamlined patient care. The shared EMR is hosted on RCH servers which is where patient information is held. Each hospital collects patient information but RCH will host, manage and support the shared EMR. MH, PMCC and The Women's and will have access to, collect and upload further information to the shared EMR in the course of treating their patients.

### Other Uses

- internal teaching and research purposes
- evaluating, planning and improving the health care services Melbourne Health provides

Where possible, de-identified data is used for these purposes

## How is your information protected?

MH and its staff comply with privacy laws, policies and protocols relating to the collection, use, disclosure and storage of patient information. Only authorised staff have access to your information. All paper and electronic systems are managed and maintained appropriately in accordance with industry standards and that will apply to the shared EMR. Staff across all four health services will only access patient information in the shared EMR if they are involved or supporting your care and treatment. Policies and procedures at each health service guide staff in the collection, use, release and disposal of personal information. Access to information and systems is audited regularly to monitor staff compliance.

## To whom might we disclose your information?

We may disclose your information to others outside Melbourne Health, including your own doctor and other health and care community support providers, if this is necessary for your further treatment. If you are an inpatient, we will tell your relatives and friends where you are and your general condition if they call or visit.

We will disclose your information to any person or organisation authorised by you. This will usually involve you signing a release document. Melbourne Health may also be obliged to release your information:

- where required by law (e.g. by Act of Parliament or in the case of a legal claim)
- where required by government authorities and departments (e.g. registration of births, deaths, diseases and treatments)

## Can you refuse to disclose your information?

Yes, you have the right to refuse disclosure of your information to providers outside the Parkville Precinct. You may exercise this right by completing a *Refusal of Consent to Disclosure and Use of Information* form. However, refusing permission to disclose your information might inhibit you receiving appropriate care and treatment in the future. If you have any questions about disclosing your information, please speak with a staff member involved in your care.

## Who might contact you after you have been treated by Melbourne Health?

- A member of the health care team for follow up, including service evaluation
- A Melbourne Health researcher to invite you to participate in a research project
- Our fundraising department, or its representatives, may send you information or contact you with a request for financial support. If you do not wish for this to happen, please contact The Royal Melbourne Hospital Foundation on 9342 7111 or via email to [info@rmhfoundation.org.au](mailto:info@rmhfoundation.org.au). Visit the website at [www.rmhfoundation.org.au](http://www.rmhfoundation.org.au).

## What if you are unable to give consent?

If you are unable to give permission for your information to be released, permission may be sought from your authorised representative. People who are permitted to act as an 'authorised representative' for a patient are specified by law. Your authorised representative may exercise the same rights as you in relation to withholding consent to the use or disclosure of, or making a request for access to, your information.

## How long do we keep information about you?

Medical records are usually destroyed 15 years after your last visit.

## How can you gain access to your information?

The Freedom of Information Act (FOI) gives you the right to access your medical record. Requests for access must be made in writing to the FOI Officer.

Mail: Melbourne Health Freedom of Information      OR      Email: [FOIrequest@mh.org.au](mailto:FOIrequest@mh.org.au)  
Health Information Services  
Royal Melbourne Hospital, PO Box 2155  
Parkville Victoria 3050

A fee may be charged for this service.

Please note that a separate Melbourne Health *Freedom of Information and You* brochure is available. If you have any questions, phone: 9342 7781 or email: [FOIrequest@mh.org.au](mailto:FOIrequest@mh.org.au)

## Privacy contact number

This brochure is an outline of the MH Privacy Policy, and MH's commitment to respecting and protecting your privacy. If you have any questions regarding what happens to information about you, please contact the Health Information Services, The Royal Melbourne Hospital on 9342 7780.

## If you have any concerns or questions about your care please contact:

If you have concerns regarding inappropriate use of your information by any Melbourne Health service, please contact our Consumer Liaison Officer on 9342 7806 or email: [consumerliaison@mh.org.au](mailto:consumerliaison@mh.org.au)

Public Affairs | PBA03.01 | Director of Public Affairs | Expiry July 2022



MELBOURNE HEALTH



The information contained in this brochure is for educational purposes only and is not intended as a substituted for consultation with a doctor or health care professional