

Pacific Plastic Surgery Clinic
Q/P 1.5.1 Privacy Policy

Pacific Plastic Surgery Clinic supports the principles of the Privacy Act effective from 21 December 2001.

Collection of information (National Privacy Principle [NPP] 1,8,10):

- Pacific Plastic Surgery Clinic records can include information supplied by the patient and other people on the patient's behalf (eg. Doctors rooms, health funds).
- The information may be given to the referring and family GP and other specialists as required for the Patient's healthcare. Additionally, Therapist, Nurses other healthcare professionals, Medicare & Health Funds will be given information necessary for healthcare. While personal health information is usually collected directly from that individual, in some circumstances this may not be reasonable (eg. child, confused) and a person responsible for the patient may be used.

Storage & maintenance of information (NPP3,4):

- Pacific Plastic Surgery Clinic will try and ensure the health information collected, used or disclosed is accurate, complete and up to date.
- All reasonable steps will be taken to protect information collected by Pacific Plastic Surgery Clinic from misuse and loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.
- Pacific Plastic Surgery Clinic will take reasonable steps to destroy health information which is no longer needed or required to be held for legal purposes. Disposal will be via the confidential waste paper bin.
- An external, quality assured archiving agency may be used for conversion of data to electronic format.

Usage & disclosure of information (NPP 2,7,9):

- Each patient is to have a unique identifier for themselves.
- Information obtained for the patients care, will not be used for other purposes unless one of the following exceptions apply:
 - Law enforcement, public health or safety circumstances
 - Billing or debt recovery
 - Management of accreditation, complaint handling and planning and evaluation of service monitoring
 - Disclosure to a medical expert (only for medico-legal opinion), insurer, medical defence organisation, lawyer, solely for the purpose of addressing liability indemnity arrangements
 - Disclosure to a lawyer for the defence of anticipated or legal proceedings.
- Disclosure of health information can be given to a person responsible (eg. parent, spouse, guardian etc.) for the patient is incapable of giving or communicating consent.
- Transfer of information overseas will only proceed in compliance with NPP9.

Access (by the individual) to information (NPP6):

- A patient will have access to the health information, help by Pacific Plastic Surgery Clinic unless the disclosure:
 - Will result in a serious threat to life or health
 - Relates to existing or anticipated legal proceedings
 - Would prejudice negotiations with an individual
 - Is unlawful or required not to be given by law.
- An individual will need to make a written application for obtaining health information. There is no fee for requesting access for information; however, Pacific Plastic Surgery Clinic may charge the reasonable cost of processing the request. This fee will be stated in a letter acknowledging the request for information. Access is available onsite at a mutually convenient time: Access does not extend to photocopying or removing the file.

Supplementary Information

- Health information may be collected, without consent, if there is a serious or imminent threat to life or health of any person. This only applies if the individual is unable to provide or communicate their consent. (eg. unconscious, confused, distressed.)
- Indirect collection of information by a pathologist will occur during specimen collection with accompanying information.
- If a **patient** wants to **transfer their care to another health service provider**, they can authorise the disclosure of health information from the original provider to the new provider. A copy of this information could be transferred this way.
- If **information is provided to a law enforcement body** (eg. police, courts) a written record must be kept.

Any **complaints about breaches of privacy** under the Privacy Act are to be referred immediately to Dr Paul Belt for review.