



Practice Privacy Policy

This Privacy Policy sets out how The Clark Suites (incorporating The Breast Centre, the Hunter Kidney Clinic and Hunter Valley Oncology) ('the Clinic') collects, uses and discloses 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.

The Clinic is, as a NSW health provider in the private sector, bound by the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)* and the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*. This includes both the Australian Privacy Principles and the NSW Health Privacy Principles.

The Clinic may, from time to time, review and update this Privacy Policy to take account of new laws and technology, changes to the Clinic's operations and practices and to make sure it remains appropriate to the services it provides.

What kinds of personal information does the Clinic collect and how does the Clinic collect it?

The Clinic collects and holds personal information, including health and other sensitive information, that is necessary and relevant to provide you with medical care and treatment. This information may include:

- Your name, address and contact details;
- Your Medicare number or some other number or code that helps in identifying you or claiming payments (e.g. your health insurance number);
- A specific health care identifier such as a medical record number;
- Information within your medical history, including medical information, allergies, medications, immunisations, social history, family history, risk factors and previous incidents or adverse events.

Personal Information the client provides

The Clinic will generally collect personal information about you by way of the following:

- Forms filled out by you, or if appropriate your guardian, parents or care givers;
- Face-to-face consultations, emails and telephone calls;
- Images such as X-rays, scans, clinical photos of you or videos. In some cases an audio recording may be collected.

This information may be stored in the form of paper-based records and/or electronic records.

Personal Information provided by other people

In some circumstances the Clinic may be provided with personal information about you from a third party, for example a report provided by a medical professional or another clinic.

How will the Clinic use the personal information you provide?

We will treat your personal information as strictly private and confidential.

The personal information you provide will only be used for the purpose of providing health care services and for claims and payments, unless otherwise consented to by you.

The Clinic may disclose personal information to other health care professionals where we request services for you, such as x-rays, pathology tests etc. or where we ask them to provide you with a health care service, such as a specialist opinion.

On occasions we are required by the law to disclose certain personal information about a patient, such as the notification of certain diseases, and in such a circumstance the Clinic will discuss this with you.

The Clinic may disclose some information to third parties engaged by or for the Practice for business purposes, such as accreditation or for the provision of information technology services. We impose security and confidentiality requirements on how they handle your personal information.

We will not disclose your personal information to an overseas recipient unless we have your consent.

There are times where the Clinic is permitted to disclose information about an individual without their consent, including where the information is:

- required by law.
- necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to a patient's life, health or safety or public health or safety, or it is impractical to obtain the patient's consent.
- to assist in locating a missing person.
- to establish, exercise or defend an equitable claim.
- for the purpose of a confidential dispute resolution process.

Management and security of personal information

The Clinic will not use any personal information in relation to direct marketing to you without your express consent. You may opt-out of direct marketing at any time by notifying the Clinic in a letter or email.

The Clinic evaluates all unsolicited information it receives to decide if it should be kept, acted on or destroyed.

The Clinic has in place steps to protect the personal information it holds from misuse, interference and loss, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure by use of various methods including: locked storage of paper records and password access rights to computerised records.

Access and correction of personal information

You are entitled to request access to your medical records. We request that you put your request in writing and we will respond to it 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 refuse your request for access to your medical records in certain circumstances permitted by law, for example, if the disclosure may cause a serious threat to your safety or health. We will always tell you why access is denied and the options you have to respond to our decision.

If you believe that the information we have about you is not accurate, complete or up-to-date, we ask you contact the Practice Manager in writing or complete our form entitled 'REQUEST TO ALTER MEDICAL RECORDS'. The Clinic will take reasonable steps to correct personal information where it is satisfied they are not accurate or up to date. From time to time, the Clinic will ask patients to verify the personal information held by the Practice is correct and up to date.

Should you wish to access any of the information that we hold concerning you, we refer you to our handout entitled 'ACCESSING YOUR MEDICAL RECORD'.

Enquiries and complaints

Should you, at any time, have a query or complaint in relation to the privacy policies in place at this practice please contact the Practice Manager who will be happy to address any concerns you may have.

It is the practice's policy that any complaint is made in writing and addressed to the Practice Manager and marked "private and confidential". We will use our best endeavours to address complaints within 30 days of receipt of your complaint.

Should you be unsatisfied with our response to your privacy complaint, you may lodge a written complaint with the NSW or Commonwealth Privacy Commissioner.