

### How do I obtain further information?

Contact the FOI Officer for any of the following:

- For general information about your privacy rights or a copy of our Patient Information Privacy Policy.
- To obtain an FOI application form. You can also download this at [www.austin.org.au](http://www.austin.org.au).
- To change your consent.

### FOI Officer

Health Information Services  
Austin Health  
PO Box 5444  
Heidelberg West Vic 3081  
Ph: 03 9496 3103

If you have a complaint, please contact:

### Patient Representative

Austin Health  
PO Box 5555  
Heidelberg 3084  
Ph: 03 9496 3566

### Websites

For further information visit:

#### Department of Human Services

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/privacy/>

#### Health Services Commissioner

[www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc)

#### Federal Privacy Commissioner

[www.privacy.gov.au](http://www.privacy.gov.au)

#### Austin Hospital

145 Studley Road, Heidelberg 3084  
Ph 9496 5000

#### Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital

300 Waterdale Road, Heidelberg West 3081  
Ph 9496 5000

#### Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre

1 Yarra Boulevard, Kew 3011  
Ph 9490 7500



## Respecting your privacy

How Austin Health uses  
your personal information

# Respecting your privacy How Austin Health uses your personal information

## What happens to information about me?

Information collected is used to manage your care. It is used and stored in a professional and secure manner.

Austin Health is committed to protecting your privacy. We comply with relevant Government Acts, including the *Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)*, *Health Services Act 1988 (Vic)* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)*. We have strict policies in place about who can access your information and staff must maintain your privacy.

## What details does Austin Health collect about me?

Each patient of any Austin Health service (including off site services) has a paper and computer medical record that contains:

- your name and contact details
- the contact details of your local doctor and next-of-kin
- details about your health treatment.

Austin Health may also collect information from other health care providers if needed and add this to your record.

## How does Austin Health use this information?

- Health care staff who treat you use this information to make decisions about tests, treatment or other care. Without this information, clinicians may not be able to make the best choices about your care.
- Statistics are retained about patients' conditions and treatment to help plan better services, to understand health trends and for research and teaching purposes. Published statistical reports contain no personal identifying information.

- You may be asked, during your stay or afterwards, to join a research project that has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee. If you agree you will be asked to sign a consent form.
- We are legally required to present your medical record in court if asked; provide records to Workcover or TAC; and report certain diseases to the Department of Human Services and the Victorian Cancer Registry.
- We also report statistical information to government funding bodies.

## Who may contact me when I go home?

Austin Health staff may contact you after you go home to:

- offer health education
- ask you to join a research project
- complete a patient satisfaction survey. If you do not want to receive a survey, let hospital staff know or contact the FOI Officer on telephone 03 9496 3103.
- ask for a donation to Austin Health. If you do not want to receive fundraising requests contact the Fundraising Department on telephone 03 9496 5753.

## How long is my record kept?

Medical records are kept for at least seven years from your last visit and then may be destroyed.

## Can I access my medical record?

Under the *Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 1982*, you can apply to see or obtain copies of your medical record. A fee may apply. You can ask to have changes made if you disagree with its contents.

## Apart from hospital staff, who else may receive information about me?

Austin Health shares information to provide the best treatment for you. If you do not want your information to be shared as described below, please ask for a 'Refusal of Consent To Disclose Information' form.

- It is common to send a letter to your general practitioner (GP) when you go home after being in hospital. The letter will tell your GP about your health status, your treatment, including your medication and any ongoing care needs.
- It is also common to send a letter to your general practitioner after an outpatient appointment, although not usually for every visit.
- Sometimes, health care workers, other than Austin Health staff, may ask for or give us information about your care needs, including: ambulance and other patient transport services, your specialist, community nurse, or local council services.
- We tell your friends and relatives where you are located and information about your general condition, if they call or visit. We only discuss your treatment with your next of kin or other people you have asked us to advise.
- We tell ex-service organisations about veteran inpatients so that they may visit veterans or their dependants whilst they are inpatients. If you do not want to be visited by someone from an ex-service organisation, contact the Veteran Liaison Office on telephone 03 9496 2324.