

Protecting Your Privacy

This document explains what information we collect, how we use your health information, and the circumstances that allow you to refuse sharing of your information.

How Austin Health keeps your information private

Austin Health is subject to the following laws when handling your personal and health information:

- Health Records Act 2001 (Vic) and the Health Privacy Principles
- Health Services Act 1988 (Vic)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
- Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022 (Vic)
- My Health Records Act 2012 (Cth)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

We have strict policies on how we collect, store, use, access and disclose patient information. Your information can only be viewed by authorised staff.

Information that Austin Health collects about you

We may collect information from you, your representatives, and external healthcare providers where lawful and necessary. If this information is not provided, we may be unable to provide appropriate care to you. This includes:

- Personal information such as your name, sex assigned at birth, gender and contact details
- The contact details of your General Practitioner (GP) and nominated representatives
- Details about your healthcare including relevant information from other healthcare providers

If your contact details or GP details change, please tell us at your next visit or call 03 9496 5447.

How Austin Health uses your information

Austin Health uses your information to:

- Make decisions about your care in partnership with you
- Provide health education to you
- Coordinate your care with other healthcare providers and support continuity of care
- Contact you about surveys to help us understand your experience about your visit
- Invite you to participate in a research project which is approved by a Human Research Ethics Committee in accordance with national standards
- Support internal teaching, service planning, accreditation, evaluation, quality improvement, complaint resolution, funding, reporting and legal obligations
- Contact you about our fundraising work, including asking for a donation to Austin Health. Relevant staff will only receive limited contact information required to contact you and will not have access to your clinical records

Any use of artificial intelligence (AI) is in accordance with the Austin Health policy and relevant privacy laws.



Austin Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays its respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Austin Health celebrates, values and includes people of all backgrounds, genders, sexualities, cultures, bodies and abilities.



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Access to your information

- You can apply to access your health information under the Freedom of Information Act. You also have the right to request an amendment to information held. More information can be found at www.austin.org.au/foi or phone 03 9496 3103.
- Specific information such as the discharge summary, pathology and radiology reports, will be uploaded to your My Health Record (MHR). More information about MHR can be found at www.myhealthrecord.gov.au.
- The Austin Health Patient Portal also provides access to some of your information. More information can be found at www.austin.org.au/patient-portal.

You can refuse to share your information

You have the right to refuse sharing of your information. However, this may affect our ability to organise services for your ongoing care. If you do not wish to share your information with any of the organisations or services listed below, please contact the relevant department:

- A particular individual, or external healthcare providers, or if you wish to:
 - Opt out of information being uploaded to My Health Record, or
 - Not be contacted for patient satisfaction surveys

Please contact the Health Information Services on 03 9496 5447.

- Fundraising requests

Please contact the Fundraising Department on 03 9496 5753.

- Ex-service organisations

Please contact the Veteran Liaison Office on 03 9496 2324.

Who outside of Austin Health may receive information about you?

Austin Health may be required to access and share your information with external healthcare providers to provide you with the best care or organise services for you. A secure electronic health information sharing system called CareSync Exchange will be used. More information can be found at www.health.vic.gov.au/quality-safety-service/caresync-exchange.

- If you stay in hospital, visitors are only informed of your ward and general condition. We only discuss your treatment with your authorised representatives.
- If you are a veteran or a dependant of a veteran, ex-service organisations may be notified of your admission so they may visit you whilst you are in the hospital and provide support.
- We release information when required or permitted by law. For example, under the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme; or to prescribed entities for quality and safety purposes.
- We provide information to police or court via subpoenas or warrants. Information is not provided without sighting the required legal documents.
- We report deidentified statistical information to government funding bodies and report mandatory information to the Department of Health, government bodies or registries.

Privacy Concerns

If you are concerned that Austin Health has not respected your privacy, you can contact the Patient Experience Office at Austin Health on 03 9496 3566 or email feedback@austin.org.au.

For further information
Department: Health Information Services
Phone: 03 9496 5447

