

Osteopathy: Our practice and your privacy

Privacy at a glance

The provision of safe and quality osteopathic care is our principal concern. This requires a strong relationship between the osteopath and the patient based on trust and confidentiality.

Your osteopath regards your health information as confidential. Your personal information is handled in accordance with the practice's privacy policy and is consistent with Commonwealth and State/Territory law.

You are entitled to know what personal information is held about you; how and under what circumstances it may be disclosed; when consent is required for these purposes; and how it is stored.

We will discuss these matters with you at the time your health information is collected while attending this practice.

Clinical records are stored and transmitted securely and safeguarded against loss or damage.

Access to your information

You have the right to access your information. You may ask to view the information or ask for a copy of a part or of the whole record. You are not required to give reasons, but you may be asked to clarify the scope of the request.

Often a request will need to be in writing. Access to some information may be limited in some circumstances, but in such an event we will advise you of the reasons.

At your request, your health information held by this practice will be made available to another health service provider.

Under the Privacy Principles, the practice may charge a fee if it incurs costs in providing access, particularly if records need to be copied. Typically, it's about \$25 but may be higher for larger files.

If you find that the information held is not accurate or complete, you may have that information amended accordingly.

Parents/guardians and children

Although this may surprise some parents, privacy laws apply to children as well as adults. Under the Privacy Guidelines, a child's right to privacy of their health information may at times restrict access by parents/guardians to that same information.

Collection, use, and disclosure of your health information

Osteopaths must keep clinical records. It's a government requirement, and information about your medical and family health history is needed to provide accurate diagnoses and appropriate treatment.

We will only seek information that is relevant to your health. This information is generally collected directly from you or otherwise with your consent. However, from time to time we may receive information from others (for example, X-ray images and referrals from other practitioners). When this occurs, we will wherever possible make sure you know we have received this information.

Some information about you may be provided to Medicare or your private health insurer, if relevant, for billing and rebate purposes. This information generally does not include your detailed clinical records but may depend on the terms of your insurance policy.

There are circumstances where a health practitioner is legally required to disclose information. An example of this is a subpoena or other mandatory reporting requirements.

Generally, workers compensation and traffic accident schemes require patients treated under those schemes to agree their health information can be shared with the scheme and its insurers.

It is necessary for us to keep your health information for as long as is required by law (generally 7 years after your last consultation, but longer in some circumstances).

We will inform you if we intend to transfer your clinical records to another osteopath or clinic, or if we sell or close this clinic.

Have some questions?

- > If you have questions or concerns related to the privacy of your information, you should discuss these with your osteopath or call Sunshine Beach Osteopaths clinic on (07) 54480481.
- > If you are dissatisfied, contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner at 1300 363 992 or access further information via www.oaic.gov.au.