

WHAT HAPPENS TO MY INFORMATION



What information does Bendigo Health collect about you?

When you become a patient of Bendigo Health, a medical record is created. This includes information such as your name, contact details, information about your health condition and the treatment you are given. Every time you attend or have contact with Bendigo Health, new information is added to your record.

Why do we collect your information and what do we use it for?

We collect personal and medical information to provide you with the best possible care and treatment. Your medical record allows those involved in your care to have a complete picture of your medical history.

Other uses may include:

- Internal teaching and research purposes with all personal details removed
- Evaluating, planning and improving Bendigo Health services
- Contacting you about the hospital's fundraising work, including asking for a donation (contact The Bendigo Health Foundation on 1300 243 000 if you do not wish to be approached).

How is your information protected?

Bendigo Health and its staff comply with strict privacy laws, policies and protocols relating to the collection, use, disclosure and storage of patient information. It is a legal requirement to protect patient health information and comply with the Health Records Act 2001 and other relevant legislation relating to confidentiality and privacy. All staff must adhere to the Health Privacy Principles detailed in the Health Records Act. This applies to all Bendigo Health staff, contractors, volunteers and students. Only authorised personnel are allowed to access your information. We conduct routine checks and monitor access to make sure our privacy policies are followed.

When is your information shared?

If you are in hospital, we may tell your relatives and friends where you are and what your general condition is if they call or visit, unless you advise us not to.

We may need to share your information for your ongoing care. People who may need this information include:

- Your GP or referring doctor
- Community nursing or council services
- Clinicians from other hospitals.

Common types of information we securely share with other health professionals include:

- Discharge summaries
- Test results
- List of medications
- List of ongoing appointments
- Special needs.

Can legislation force the release or sharing of personal information?

There are times when Bendigo Health is required by law to release personal patient information.

Times like this can include:

- A subpoenaed medical record to use as evidence in court
- Registration of a reportable disease to the Department of Health and the Victorian Cancer Registration
- A health insurance claim being processed by the Health Insurance Commission
- To support assessment and management of risk of family violence
- When any other special laws require Bendigo Health to release information.

My Health Record

My Health Record is an Australian Government initiative to provide a national digital health record. Your clinical information will be uploaded to your My Health Record, unless you opt out of the scheme.

We respect your right to refuse information being sent to your My Health Record. If you do not want us to upload information, you need to tell us at every attendance to hospital or you can restrict access via the My Health Record system.

More information can be found at www.myhealthrecord.gov.au or by contacting the helpline on 1800 723 471.

What if your personal information changes?

It is important your medical record contains your most up-to date information. If your personal details are wrong or have changed, please let us know at your next visit.

How long do we keep your information?

Bendigo Health follow the Retention and Disposal guidelines as required by Public Record Office Victoria.

How can you gain access to your information?

The Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 1982 gives you the right to access your medical record. Requests for access must be made in writing to the FOI Officer with a completed application form, which is available on our website. A fee applies for this service.

Privacy feedback

If you have feedback about the management of your privacy, you can talk to any member of your treating team. Alternatively, you can contact our Patient Feedback Coordinator on 5454 9079. There are also external organisations which assist with health care complaints.

- **Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC)**
1300 006 842
www.ovic.vic.gov.au
- **Health Complaints Commissioner**
1300 582 113
www.hcc.vic.gov.au

When can I find out more?

For more information on

Privacy

Visit the Bendigo Health website: www.bendigohealth.org.au

Freedom of information

More information and an application form can be found on the Bendigo Health website: www.bendigohealth.org.au

References

Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic), Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic), Health Records Act 2001 (Vic), My Health Records Act 2012

Who do I contact?

Freedom of Information Officer

PO Box 126 Bendigo Victoria 3552

Email: foi@bendigohealth.org.au

Phone: 5454 8307