



Privacy Policy – A Patient Guide

1. Introduction

Pacific Smiles Group (PSG) respects your right to privacy and recognises that maintaining patient confidentiality is an integral part of providing health services.

The Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) was amended effective 21 December 2001 to include ten (10) National Privacy Principles, which apply to all parts of the private sector and all health service providers. In addition, to the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), some states have also enacted privacy legislation.

Pacific Smiles Group complies with all our obligations to you under the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) as at the latest update to the Act which came into effect 24 September 2007.

This Policy describes how we manage any personal and health information we have collected about you.

2. What is personal information?

Personal information is any information which PSG may obtain from you or sometimes from others associated with your health care. PSG may hold the following information about you:

- Name, address, telephone numbers
- Date of birth
- Employers Name
- Health information
- Name of general practitioner or referring practitioner
- Private Health Fund information
- Medicare Number (where applicable)
- Workers compensation and motor vehicle accident details
- Transaction details associated with services we have provided to you
- Details of clinical treatment associated with services we have provided to you
- Any information you provided to us through patient / referrer surveys or feedback
- Any additional information you may have provided us

PSG will destroy or de-identify personal information after our legal obligations to retain the information have expired.

3. Who will be collecting your personal information?

Your personal information will be collected by PSG, at any one of its Dental and/or Eye Care Centres for its own use in connection with the provision of your health care and for associated administrative purposes. Your personal information will only be collected by fair and lawful means. Your personal information will be collected directly from you unless it is collected by another authorised individual or organisation and provided to us by a referral. All employees of PSG are trained in understanding their obligations in regards to patient confidentiality.

4. Data Quality

PSG takes reasonable steps to keep all current personal and health information it holds up-to-date, accurate and complete.

5. What does PSG do with my personal information?

Patient information is used and disclosed for purposes directly related to your health care, and in ways that are consistent with your expectations for quality and continuity of care.

PSG uses your information:

- to provide dental and/or optical treatment and care;
- to provide information to other dental, optical and medical practitioners who provide treatment, necessary follow up treatment and ongoing health care to you;
- to assist with any telephone calls you make to us;
- for our internal administration requirements;
- to process private health fund claims;
- to process Medicare claims (where applicable)
- to distribute information about our services to you;
- for internal reporting procedures in a de-identified form;
- for quality assurance or clinical audit where we seek to evaluate and improve the delivery of a particular aspect of our service;
- for complaint handling and defence of anticipated or existing legal activities;
- for planning and evaluation of accreditation activities;
- if lawfully instructed to reveal information.

The National Privacy Principles prohibit the use of the personal information that we collect and hold about you for certain purposes unless you provide consent.

You may at any time opt out of your consent to receiving any communications from us (other than as required for the operation of our business such as payment of your account) by notifying PSG in writing.

6. Disclosure of Information

PSG will not disclose personal information except on a confidential basis to agents that we use in the ordinary operation of our business, such as for data processing, printing, mailing, professional accreditation and quality assurance.

Requests for your information, for example copies of records and x-rays, will only be released upon completion of an **APPLICATION FOR COPY OF DENTAL RECORDS** form which is available at reception. A fee for collation, copying and delivery of information may be charged.

7. Storage and Data Security

All reasonable measures are taken to protect personal and health information within PSG from unauthorised access, improper use, disclosure, unlawful destruction and accidental loss. PSG endeavours to contain all patient information electronically. Any paper based information (e.g. medical history forms) is shredded once the information has been transferred to your electronic records.

PSG stores personal information:

- a. contained in electronic databases in a secure environment with controlled access;
- b. contained in paper based and other hard copy documents located securely within the Centre. All Centres have security alarms which are in operation outside business hours and most Centres are monitored by closed circuit security cameras; and
- c. archived to a dedicated storage facility.

8. Access and Correction

PSG will undertake reasonable steps to ensure your personal information is accurate. You may request access to personal information we hold about you by writing to PSG at the address below.

You do not have to provide a reason for requesting access. Where we hold information that you are entitled to access, we will endeavour to provide you with the information within a reasonable period. In most cases personal collection of the information is the preferred option. On collection we will ask you for a form of identification such as a drivers licence and/or credit card. A fee for collation, copying and delivery of information may be charged.

If PSG deems it necessary to deny your application for personal information then we will give you our reasons for denial in writing. If you believe that personal information we hold about you is incorrect, incomplete or inaccurate then you may request it to be amended. We will then consider if the information requires amendment. If we do not agree that there are grounds for amendment then we will add a note to the personal information stating that you disagree with it.

9. Identifiers

A numeric identifier is allocated to each patient that attends a PSG facility to enable ongoing care and treatment to be provided. PSG uses a four digit number

10. Transborder Data Flow

PSG will only transfer information outside the state in circumstances where the information will have appropriate protection, where transfer is necessary for provision of service to the individual and where consent has been obtained in writing.

11. Contact us

If you would like any further information, have any questions about this policy or any concerns regarding treatment of your privacy by PSG please contact us at:

The Privacy Officer
Pacific Smiles Group
PO Box 2246
GREENHILLS NSW 2323

In this policy, personal information, health information and sensitive information have the same meaning as under the Privacy Act.

This document represents Pacific Smiles Groups Privacy Policy at the date noted below. We may change or update this policy from time to time. Although we intend to observe this policy at all times, it is not legally binding on PSG in any way.

PSG operates Pacific Smiles Dental Care Centres and nib Dental Care Centres.