

Introduction

The purpose of this Privacy Policy document is to outline how ENT Otago and Otago Skin Surgery Ltd (collectively referred to as ENT Otago, located at Suite 20, Marinoto Clinic, Dunedin), complies with its confidentiality and privacy obligations.

As an organisation, our principal concern is and always has been the health of patients who visit Suite 20. ENT Otago acknowledges that confidentiality of patient information is paramount and that all patient information is subject to strict obligations of doctor/patient confidentiality.

Collection of Health Information

We have adopted privacy compliance standards relevant to ensure personal information is protected.

We may collect personal information (including health information from other agencies) regarding patients for the purpose of providing and administering specialist medical services and treatment to patients.

Personal information collected will generally include:

- the patient's name, address, telephone number and NHI number;
- the name of the patient's General Practitioner;
- health care insurance provider;
- where applicable previous and current medical history, including where clinically relevant a family medical history,
- current drugs or treatments used by the patient;
- health service provider or medical specialist to whom the patient is referred;
- from other health providers and shared health records (e.g. receipt of laboratory, radiology or other results);
- from non-health agencies and organisations (e.g. ACC and Work and Income); and
- copies of any letters of referrals and copies of any reports back.

We may access information:

- provided directly by the patient (or where the patient is under the age of 16 provided by the parent of the patient);
- provided on the patient's behalf with the patient's consent;

- from a health service provider who refers the patient to the Specialist; and
- from health service providers to whom patients are referred.

Use or disclosure of Personal Health Information

Personal health information collected by us may be used or disclosed:

- for the purpose of providing and administering specialist medical services and treatment to the patient;
- to the patient's caregiver and the patient has not objected to the disclosure;
- to the parent of a child under the age of 16 (subject to some limitations);
- as required for delivery of the specialist medical service to the patient (e.g. outside agencies which assist us in providing and administering health care and treatment, such as audiology testing and medical laboratories for testing samples);
- for the purpose of a criminal proceeding; or
- where there is a serious and imminent threat to the patient or another person's life, health, or safety; or
- a serious threat to public health or public safety.

Secondary purposes which are directly related to the primary purpose of collection for which we may use or disclose personal information may be for quality assurance; training; billing; liaising with ACC or medical insurance providers (where consent has been given).

Security of Information

Other than as described in this Policy or permitted under the Privacy Act 1993 and/or the Health Information Privacy Code 1994, ENT Otago uses its reasonable endeavours to ensure that identifying health information is not disclosed to any person unnecessarily or irresponsibly.

We ensure that the health information that Suite 20 holds is stored securely so that it cannot be accessed or used by unauthorised people. Information may be stored electronically and/or in hard copy form. Our electronic files are password protected and regular backups of data are performed.

We require all our employees and contractors to observe obligations of confidentiality in the course of their employment/contract. We require independent contractors to sign a confidentiality undertaking.

We keep health information for a minimum of 10 years from the date of last entry in the patient's record.

Accuracy of your information

ENT OTAGO is committed to ensuring your information is accurate and has processes in place to ensure that the accuracy of this information is maintained. If you believe that the personal information that we hold about you is inaccurate, please inform the Receptionist when next attending Suite 20 or call us on 03 464 0222.

Accessing your information

On request, you may have access to your medical record held by ENT OTAGO, except in circumstances where access may be denied under the Privacy Act or the Health Information Privacy Code, or other laws. For example, access can be denied when letting a patient see their records would pose a serious threat to the patient's life or health, or the life or health of someone else (such as a relative, the health service provider, staff or other patients).

The threat must be significant, for example where there is a serious risk the patient may cause self-harm or harm to another person if they saw the information. The threat can be a risk of danger to physical or mental health, but does not need to be imminent - it can be a serious threat that might occur sometime after access is granted.

Contact information and complaints

If an individual wishes to:

- complain to us about a breach of privacy; or
- find out more about how we deal with personal information, that individual can contact:

The Privacy Officer
ENT Otago
Suite 20
Marinoto Clinic
72 Newington Avenue
DUNEDIN 9010

Or ph. 03 464 0222 or email: admin.entotago@clear.net.nz