

## What happens to information?

Continued...

Other hospitals or new doctors that you visit may contact The Royal Children's Hospital to obtain information about you so that they can care for you and treat you in the best possible manner. We would ask them to provide written authorisation from you before releasing information to them. In an emergency situation however, we will release information about you to facilitate your care. General information about your condition may also be provided to your next of kin or a near relative, unless you request otherwise.

Apart from what is described in this brochure, no personal identifiable information will be released without your prior consent.



We are committed to  
maintaining the privacy  
of your information

## Access to your information

Staff in your health care team are the best source of information about your care and treatment. Speak to a staff member if you have any questions about your care.

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* sets out your right to access your medical record and personal information held by The Royal Children's Hospital. If you would like access to information collected about your care, ask a staff member or contact the Freedom of Information Officer. The request process may require you to complete an application and to pay a fee.

If you identify information that is incorrect or you do not agree with, you have a right to request that it be amended. Speak with a staff member or the Freedom of Information Officer who will arrange this for you.

## Need more information?

If you have further questions or would like to request access to your information contact the Freedom of Information Officer during business hours on: **9345 5156**



# The privacy of your personal information



A brochure for  
patients, parents  
or legal guardians  
of children attending  
The Royal Children's  
Hospital.

## What information is collected and why?

Information is collected during your (or your child's) visit to hospital to help with your care. For example, your age, symptoms, previous illness or medication may all play a role in your current care and will be collected by hospital staff.

Other information collected and stored includes, for example, your name, address, gender, religion, main language spoken and details of your local doctor. Collection is important as it helps us to plan your treatment whilst in hospital and after discharge.

Each time you attend hospital, information about you will be updated. We aim to keep your information accurate and up to date at all times to make sure the best possible care and service can be provided. Please let a staff member know or contact us when your details, such as address or local doctor, change.

The Royal Children's Hospital protects privacy by keeping personal information secure from unauthorised access, use or loss.



## Protecting your privacy

The Royal Children's Hospital protects privacy by keeping personal information secure from unauthorised access, use or loss.

As a patient you have a central paper medical record that is stored securely within Health Information Services. Information is also stored on computer systems. Your information is accessed in the medical record and computer systems by staff involved in your care.

All staff employed by The Royal Children's Hospital have a duty to protect the privacy of personal information. Strict policies provide staff with guidelines for collection, use, release and disposal of personal information. This includes controls on password allocation for accessing The Royal Children's Hospital computer systems.

## How is information used?

Your information is used by those involved in your care and treatment. For example, information about your religion may be used to offer Pastoral care and Chaplaincy services. It may also be used within The Royal Children's Hospital for planning, evaluation and quality improvement. When using your information for these activities we remove details that identify you whenever possible. These activities provide the opportunity for improvements in care that benefit the community.

Ethics Committees at The Royal Children's Hospital provide strict guidelines for conducting research to ensure that patient privacy is protected. This is in accordance with the National Health & Medical Research Council's policies which includes a requirement that information identifying an individual can only be released if the individual provides consent.

## What happens to information?

Certain information relating to your hospital visit may be forwarded to the Victorian Department of Human Services. This information is summarised and does not identify you. Rather than being used for personal treatment and care, the information is used for funding, planning and improving health care quality.

In some circumstances The Royal Children's Hospital is required by law to release information. Some details about people who have specific conditions (for example, some infectious diseases and types of cancer) must be reported to databases or registers maintained securely by the Department of Human Services or other health care bodies. Information may also be provided to a court or tribunal when subpoenaed.

We also provide information to your local doctor. Once discharged from hospital, or after an emergency or outpatient visit, we normally write a letter, fax or electronically transfer information to your doctor. This information provides your doctor with a summary of your admission or visit to hospital, your medication requirements and any special instructions that the doctor may need to be aware of.

continued →