

Toukley Family Practice Privacy Policy

Current as of: January 2026

1. Purpose

This policy ensures that Toukley Family Practice complies with:

- **Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)** and Australian Privacy Principles (APPs)
- **Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)**
- **RACGP Standards for General Practices (5th Edition, 2020)**

It outlines the management of patient health information, including collection, storage, access, sharing, duplication, and consent for audio/visual recording, telehealth, or remote consultations.

2. Definitions

Patient Health Record (PHR):

A patient health record is any record, whether physical or electronic, created or collected by the practice that documents an individual patient's health information. This includes:

- Personal and demographic information
- Medical history, medications, allergies, immunisations, investigations, social/family history, and risk factors
- Clinical notes, diagnostic results, referral letters, and care plans
- Records of consultations, including telehealth sessions, and any real-time audio or visual recordings made with consent

Informed Consent:

Informed consent is the voluntary agreement by a patient to a medical or administrative action after being provided with adequate information regarding:

- The nature and purpose of the action
- Any potential risks and benefits
- Alternatives available
- How their information will be used, stored, duplicated, or shared

Consent must be documented in the patient's health record, and patients may revoke consent at any time.

3. Collection of Patient Health Information

We collect information:

- At registration and during consultations
- From electronic sources, including My Health Record
- From other health providers, hospitals, or guardians where applicable
- During telehealth or remote consultations, including audio/visual sessions (with informed consent)

Consent for recording:

- Real-time audio/visual recording of consultations (in-person, telehealth, or remote) requires informed consent that is documented in the patient's file.
 - Patients must be informed of:
 - How recordings will be stored securely
 - Who may access the recording
 - Retention and destruction timelines
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4. Use and Disclosure of Patient Health Information

Patient information is used and disclosed only for:

- Provision of healthcare and clinical management
- Billing, claims, audits, accreditation, and staff training
- Compliance with legal requirements (e.g., mandatory notifications, subpoenas)
- Quality improvement using de-identified data

Restrictions:

- Information will not be shared without consent unless legally required
- Only staff who require access for patient care or administrative purposes may view records

Telehealth & Remote Consultations:

- Patient records from telehealth are maintained in the same secure format as in-person records
 - Audio/visual recordings require informed consent before, during, and after the consultation if duplication or storage is necessary however our practice does not currently record audio/visual records
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5. Storage and Security

- Patient health records are stored electronically on encrypted, secure servers with daily backups
 - Access is limited to authorised staff only, protected by passwords and access controls
 - Audio/visual recordings are stored separately with restricted access, encrypted, and deleted according to retention policies however our practice does not currently record audio/visual records
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6. Access, Correction, and Duplication

- Patients may request access, correction, or copies of their health records in writing
 - Requests for access must be fulfilled within 30 days
 - Copies of records may incur fees, outlined in the practice schedule of fees
 - Patients may request copies of telehealth recordings or audio/visual files if consented however our practice does not currently record audio/visual records
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7. Informed Consent for Telehealth and Recording

- Before a telehealth or remote consultation, patients must receive information on:
 - How the session will be conducted
 - Storage, duplication, and access of consultation records
 - Rights to refuse or withdraw consent at any time
 - Consent must be documented in the patient health record
 - Patients who decline recording are still entitled to care; alternative arrangements will be made
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8. Complaints and Privacy Breaches

- Complaints must be submitted in writing to the **Practice Manager**
 - The practice will respond within **10 business days**
 - Patients may also contact:
 - **Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC):** www.oaic.gov.au | 1300 363 992
 - **Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC):**
 - Phone: (02) 9219 7444 | Toll Free NSW: 1800 043 159 | TTY: (02) 9219 7555
 - Email: hccc@hccc.nsw.gov.au
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9. Review

- This policy is reviewed **annually** or whenever legislative changes occur to ensure ongoing compliance with RACGP Standards and privacy legislation.
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10. Practice Details

- **Toukley Family Practice – ABN 53 103 105 611**
- Address: 37-41 Canton Beach Road, Toukley NSW 2263
- Phone: 02 4352 8600 | Email: 2ic@toukleydoctors.com.au
- **Practice Manager:** Kelly Pearce – 02 4352 8643 | kelly.pearce@toukleydoctors.com.au

Disclaimer

The Privacy Policy template for general practices is intended as a general guide only and may not be fully applicable to every practice or circumstance. The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) has used its best endeavours to adapt the template for general practice to address current and anticipated privacy requirements.

Persons adopting or implementing its procedures or recommendations should exercise their own independent skill or judgement or seek appropriate professional advice. While the template is directed at general practice, it **does not guarantee compliance with any privacy laws** and cannot, by itself, ensure that the duty of care owed to patients is fully discharged.

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