

Health information may only be collected without consent for these purposes if seeking consent is not practical, and non-identifying information would not be sufficient. For more information go to privacy.gov.au

Your access to your health information

The Western Australian Freedom of Information Act 1992 (the FOI Act) gives you the right to apply for access to information contained in your medical record.

Information in your record can be provided to you by way of an accurate, complete and up to date summary of your care, for instance if you are moving house and transferring to a new doctor. You can ask your doctor if you want a summary of your care for any reason. If you request a summary or direct access to your full medical record, your doctor will need to consider the risk of any physical or mental harm to you or any other person which may result from disclosure of your health information, and may need to remove any information that may impact on the privacy of other individuals. Depending on what is involved, you may be asked to contribute to the cost of providing the information.

Occasionally there may be times when it is not appropriate for someone to have access to their medical record. For more information go to foi.wa.gov.au

Resolving your concerns regarding the privacy of your health information

If you have any concerns regarding the privacy of your health information or the accuracy of the information held by SHQ, you should discuss these with your doctor or nurse. Inaccurate information will be corrected or your concerns noted in the records.

For more information contact:

Sexual Health Quarters

70 Roe Street, Northbridge WA 6003
Ph 08 9227 6177 | info@shq.org.au

Magenta

Ph 08 9328 1387 | admin@magenta.org.au
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shq.org.au



SHQ acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land and community. In particular we acknowledge the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation who are the traditional owners of the land on which we are based.

Our Clinical Services

Your personal information and privacy



This leaflet aims to explain how personal information about you and your health is recorded and managed by Sexual Health Quarters (SHQ) Clinical Services. SHQ is committed to maintaining privacy in accordance with the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2001.

Information about your personal health is now stored electronically in a secure medical records database. SHQ staff will take all reasonable steps to ensure your medical records:

- are accurate, complete and up to date
- have enough information to allow another doctor or nurse to continue treatment
- do not contain offensive or irrelevant comments about you
- can be used to remind you, with your permission, to return for follow-up, check-ups and reviews.

SHQ staff will only collect information that is relevant to your care. You are encouraged to ask the doctor or nurse if you are uncertain about why information is being collected. Please note: administration staff do not have access to medical records.

When you arrive for your appointment, you will be asked to sign a form saying you have read and understood SHQ's Privacy Statement. This signature can also be used to match any future signatures if you wish to allow other health professionals to access your health information. You will also need to provide a minimal amount of personal information (e.g. name, date of birth, contact details) to allow SHQ to create a unique client record, even if you don't plan on making another appointment.

Providing your information to other health professionals

The doctors and nurses at SHQ respect your right to decide how your personal health information is used or disclosed.

It is important that other people involved in your care, such as other doctors or health professionals, are informed of relevant parts of your medical history so they can give the best care for you. In all but exceptional circumstances, personal information that identifies you will not be sent to other people without your consent. Gaining your consent is the guiding principle.

At SHQ, it is customary for all doctors and nurses to have access to all medical records. If you have any concerns about other doctors and nurses at SHQ being able to see your records, discuss your concerns with your doctor or nurse.

Providing your information to others

SHQ *will not* disclose your personal health information to a third party (e.g. a specialist, hospital or insurer) unless:

- you have consented to the disclosure
- the disclosure is necessary because you are at risk of harm without treatment and you are unable to give consent
- your doctor is legally obliged to disclose the information (e.g. notification of certain infectious diseases or suspected child abuse, or a subpoena or court order)
- the information is necessary to obtain Medicare payments or other health insurance rebates
- there is an overriding public health and safety interest in the release of the information.

Note about Pap smears

The results of Pap smears are automatically sent to the WA Cervical Cytology Registry (CCR), as required by the Health (Cervical Cytology Register) Regulations, 1991 (WA). The CCR maintains and operates a central, computerised confidential database of women's Pap smear results, which ensures they are reminded when their Pap smear is overdue, and that any abnormal results are followed up.

If you have had a Pap smear for the first time, you will receive a welcome letter from the CCR. If you would prefer not to be on the Register you can notify the CCR in writing.

For more information go to health.wa.gov.au/cervical/ccr

Using health information for quality improvement and research

SHQ may use non-identifying health information to assist in improving the quality of client care or in research projects to improve health care in the community.

Under the National Privacy Principles (NPPs) sensitive information cannot usually be collected without the person's consent (NPP 10). Health information is one type of sensitive information (as defined in section 6 of the Privacy Act, 1988 (Cth) (the Privacy Act)). However NPP 10.3 permits organisations to collect health information without consent in some circumstances where the information is for:

- research or the compilation or analysis of statistics relevant to public health or public safety; or
- the management, funding or monitoring of a health service.