



## Privacy Policy

Current as of: 21/08/2025

Next review date: 21/08/2026

### 1. Introduction

This privacy policy is to provide information to you, our patient, on how your personal information (which includes your health information) is collected and used within our practice, and the circumstances in which we may share it with third parties.

### 2. Who can I contact about this policy?

For enquiries concerning this policy, you can contact [shgpahs@outlook.com](mailto:shgpahs@outlook.com)

### 3. When and why is your consent necessary?

When you register as a patient of this practice, you provide consent for the GPs and practice staff to access and use your personal information to facilitate the delivery of healthcare. Access to your personal information is restricted to practice team members who require it for your care. If we ever use your personal information for purposes other than outlined in this document, we will obtain additional consent from you.

It is important to us that as our patient, you understand why we collect and use your personal information.

By acknowledging this Privacy Policy you consent to us collecting, holding, using, retaining and disclosing your personal information in the manners described below.

### 4. Why do we collect, use, store, and share your personal information?

The practice collects, uses, stores, and shares your personal information primarily to manage your health safely and effectively. This includes providing healthcare services, managing medical records, and ensuring accurate billing and payments. Additionally, we may utilise your information for internal quality and safety improvement processes such as practice audits, accreditation purposes, and staff training to maintain high-quality service standards.

### 5. What personal information is collected?

The information we will collect about you includes your:

- names, date of birth, addresses, contact details
- medical information including medical history, medicines, allergies, and adverse reactions immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors
- Medicare number (where available) for identification and claiming purposes
- healthcare identifier numbers
- health fund details.

### 6. Can you deal with us anonymously?

You can deal with us anonymously or under a pseudonym unless it is impracticable for us to do so or unless we are required or authorised by law to only deal with identified individuals.

### 7. How is personal information collected?

The practice may collect your personal information in several different ways:

When you first attend the Southern Highlands After Hours Service staff will collect your personal and demographic information via your registration.

We may also collect your personal information when you use our call service to speak with our on-call GP, visit our website, send us an email or SMS, telephone us, or communicate with us using social media

In some circumstances, personal information may also be collected from other sources, including:

- Your guardian or responsible person.
- Other involved healthcare providers, such as specialists, allied health professionals, hospitals, community health services, and pathology and diagnostic imaging services.
- Your health fund, Medicare, or the Department of Veterans' Affairs (if relevant).
- While providing medical services, further personal information may be collected via:
  - electronic prescribing
  - My Health Record
  - online appointments.

Various types of images may be collected and used, including:

- Photos and medical images:  
These can be taken using personal devices for medical purposes, following the guidelines outlined in our guide on using personal devices for medical images.

**We will always comply with privacy obligations when collecting personal information from third-party sources. This includes ensuring transparency with patients, obtaining necessary consents, maintaining data accuracy, securing the information, and using it only for specified purposes.**

## **8. When, why and with whom do we share your personal information?**

We sometimes share your personal information:

- with third parties for business purposes, such as accreditation agencies or information technology providers – these third parties are required to comply with APPs and this policy
- with other healthcare providers (e.g. In referral letters)
- when it is required or authorised by law (e.g. court subpoenas)
- when it is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to a patient's life, health or safety or public health or safety, or it is impractical to obtain the patient's consent
- to assist in locating a missing person
- to establish, exercise or defend an equitable claim
- for the purpose of confidential dispute resolution process
- When it is a statutory requirement to share certain personal information (e.g. some diseases require mandatory notification)
- When it is provision of medical services, through electronic prescribing, My Health Record (e.g. via Shared Health Summary, Event Summary).

Our Practice uses secure medical software Best Practice which employs automated technology to prefill documents. Where we use document automated technologies to disclose your personal or medical information such as to generate appointment bookings, referrals, medical certificates, e-scripts etc. We will only disclose your information to the extent reasonably necessary, and only for the purposes required to manage your medical care.

Only people who need to access your information will be able to do so. Other than in the course of providing medical services or as otherwise described in this policy, our practice will not share personal information with any third party without your consent.

We will not share your personal information with anyone outside Australia (unless under exceptional circumstances that are permitted by law) without your consent.

#### **9. Will your information be used for marketing purposes?**

The Southern Highlands GP After Hours Service will not use your personal information for marketing any goods or services.

#### **10. How is your information used to improve services?**

The Southern Highlands GP After Hours Service may use your personal information to improve the quality of the services we offer to our patients through Patient Surveys, &/or research and analysis of our patient data for quality improvement and for training activities with the practice team.

We may provide de-identified data to other organisations to improve population health outcomes. If we provide this information to other organisations patients cannot be identified from the information we share, the information is secure and is stored within Australia. You can let reception staff know if you do not want your de-identified information included.

#### **11. How are document automation technologies used?**

Document automation is where systems use existing data to generate electronic documents relating to medical conditions and healthcare.

The practice uses document automation technologies to create documents such as referrals, which are sent to other healthcare providers. These documents contain only your relevant medical information.

These document automation technologies are used through secure medical software Best Practice.

All users of the medical software have their own unique user credentials and password and can only access information that is relevant to their role in the practice team.

The practice complies with the Australian privacy legislation and APPs to protect your information.

All data, both electronic and paper are stored and managed in accordance with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners [Privacy and managing health information guidance](#).

#### **12. How is your personal information stored and protected?**

Your personal information may be stored at our practice in various forms.

Southern Highlands GP After Hours Service stores all personal information securely in password protected electronic format, in protected information systems & if in hard copy, stored in a secure environment. All our staff & contractors have signed confidentiality agreements.

#### **13. How can you access and correct your personal information at the practice?**

You have the right to request access to, and correction of, your personal information.

Southern Highlands GP After Hours Service acknowledges patients may request access to their medical records. We require you to put this request in writing to Southern Highlands GP After Hours Service coordinator Po Box 410, Bowral NSW 2576 and our practice will respond within 30 days.

Southern Highlands GP After Hours Service will take reasonable steps to correct your personal information where the information is not accurate or up to date. From time to time, we will ask you to verify that your personal information held by our practice is correct and current. You may request we correct or update your information. To do this please contact via [shgpahs@outlook.com](mailto:shgpahs@outlook.com)

#### **14. How can you lodge a privacy-related complaint, and how will the complaint be handled at the practice?**

We take complaints and concerns regarding privacy seriously. You should express any privacy concerns you may have. We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with the resolution procedure.

We take complaints and concerns regarding privacy seriously. You should express any privacy concerns you may have in writing. We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with our resolution procedure.

You can contact the Southern Highlands GP After Hours Service coordinator via phone, fax, mail or email and our practice will respond within 30 days.

SHGPAHS Coordinator  
Po Box 410, Bowral NSW 2576  
Ph. 1800 161 298  
Fax. 4816 1763  
Email. shgpahs@outlook.com

If you do not feel we have resolved your issue You may also contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner. The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner will require you to give them time to respond before they investigate. For further information visit [www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au) or call the OAIC (Office of the Australian Information Commissioner) on 1300 363 992.

#### **15. How is privacy on the website maintained?**

At the Southern Highlands GP After Hours Service, any personal information you share with us through website, email, and social media, is handled securely and confidentially. This practice uses google analytics and cookies.

Analytics collects general information about website visitors to determine when and where people are visiting, Google may collect information from other sources to identify users and their behaviour by their IP address, this information is only shown in the analytics data in a form that doesn't identify any personal information or the individual user's identity.

When visiting our website there are cookies set, the information collected via these cookies is of a non-personal nature.

If you submit feedback from our 'Feedback' form via the website there is personal information collected, the collection of this information is for the purpose of feedback only.

#### **16. Policy review statement**

Our privacy policy is regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with current obligations.

If any changes are made:

- They will be reflected on the website.
- Significant changes may be communicated directly to patients via email or other means.

Please check the policy periodically for updates. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us