HUNTER
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY

Privacy Policy

Purpose

Hunter Orthopaedic Surgery is committed to protecting the privacy of our patients. We will ensure that our processes for the collection, storage, access and destruction of personal and health information are in compliance with our legal obligations and professional expectations. We will inform patients of their rights and responsibilities.

Consent

During the course of your care we collect your personal information, we will seek and obtain your permission to do this or that of your carer / next of kin. We will inform you of your rights and responsibilities relating to privacy. You may alter or withdraw your consent at any time. However, you must let us know if you wish to change or limit your consent.

What we collect and why

This practice collects, stores and protects patient's personal information in order to provide patients with healthcare services. This is at first contact and any subsequent contact. Your personal details, your condition and treatment will be kept confidential by medical and other practice staff.

We will only collect personal information related to activities necessary for us to provide care and treatment to you. This includes administrative and billing purposes, quality improvement, teaching and learning activities, provision of health care within the practice and by other providers we may refer you to. You are not obliged to provide us with information and can request to remain anonymous or to use a pseudonym. You need to understand that anonymity can affect the level of care and treatment we provide to you, and we may have to decline your request if it is impractical for us to agree.

Our doctors may choose to use an AI tool to create draft clinical documentation that is then reviewed and finalised by your doctor. Your doctor makes all clinical decisions.

Sharing your information

Your information will not be disclosed without your permission unless the law requires it to be given to a designated person or authority, eg Medicare. Your consent is obtained when you first come to Hunter Orthopaedic Surgery. You can change or limit your consent, but you must discuss this with us.

Keeping your information safe

We will store information securely and protect it from unauthorised access, use or disclosure. We will ensure that your personal and health information is relevant, accurate and up to date.

We will endeavour to collect information directly from you, unless we are unable to do so, eg in an emergency. We will make every effort to confirm with you the information collected from another source, eg a family member, as soon as practicable.

Each patient will have a confidential record kept of their illness and treatment, and access is limited to professionals involved in your treatment.

If your doctor is using Gentu Scribe (AI) we will provide information regarding it's function, use and security of your data. You will have the choice to agree or disagree to it's use at each consultation both at the beginning or while the consultation is in progress.

Gentu Scribe (AI) stores audio recordings of consultations in Australian Data Centres for 30 days, these are then automatically destroyed. Processing may briefly occur in secure overseas facilities operated by vetted AI providers who give written commitments that include restrictions on data processing. Gentu does **not** use your consultation data to train large language models. All data is securely encrypted end to end, enterprise-grade protection at every step. Only your medical practice / practitioner and people authorised by the practice can access your file through Gentu.

Requesting access to information

Access to information must be requested in writing by you. This assists us in handling all requests properly. Requests will usually be discussed with your treating doctor. Please be aware that on rare occasions, access may be denied or limited due to concerns about your health and wellbeing or that of another person, if this is the case this will be discussed with you.

Other access options, such as a review of the record with the treating practitioner, may be offered to you rather than providing you with a copy of the record.

We will not charge you a fee to make a request for access to information; however reasonable fees may be charged for providing the information to you, eg for photocopying records.

If you are requesting access to the information of another person, we may not grant access without that person's consent. This can include access to a family member's health information. We recognise that children over the age of 15 can request that information about their health care is kept confidential.

Making Corrections

We will provide access to the information we have collected about you, if you wish to check its accuracy. You must request access in writing and we will respond within one week of receiving the request. If any information is incorrect, necessary changes will be made as soon as possible.

Making a complaint

If you suspect your privacy may have been breached or you are unhappy with our response to a request for access, we ask that you speak to the practice manager as soon as possible. We may request that you make your complaint in writing. Again, this helps us investigate your concerns thoroughly. We will respond within 30 days of receiving your complaint.

If you do not wish to make the complaint to us, you can contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner directly on 1300 363 992.