



Lockyer Valley OT Privacy Brochure

In December 2001, all Australians were given new privacy rights. These rights protect the way your health information is handled by private health service providers and many other private sector organisations.

My Privacy, My Choice

The *Privacy Act 1988* now includes ten National Privacy Principles or NPPs. These principles set the minimum standard that health service providers must abide by when they collect, use, disclose and store your health information.

Your new privacy rights mean:

- ✓ you should be told about what happens to your health information
- ✓ you have more choice and control over your information
- ✓ you can ask to see what is in your health record and, if you think it is wrong, you can ask for it to be corrected
- ✓ you should be told why and when a health service provider may need to share your information, for example to ensure you get quality treatment and care.

Which health services are covered by the Privacy Act?

Any private sector organisation that assesses or records information about your health and any organisation that maintains or improves your health or that dispenses prescription or medicinal preparations.

So, what is health information?

Any information or an opinion about your health or disability either past, present or future. As well as any other personal information collected while you are receiving a health service, and this includes:

- ✓ the symptoms you describe or the provider's observations of your health
- ✓ prescriptions
- ✓ billing details
- ✓ pathology reports, such as those relating to blood samples and X-rays
- ✓ dental records
- ✓ your Medicare number
- ✓ private hospital and day surgery admission and discharge records
- ✓ genetic information – perhaps following a genetic or paternity test
- ✓ other sensitive information about things such as your race, sexuality or religion when it's collected by a health service.

Consent

Usually, when a health service provider needs to collect, use or disclose your health information, they will need your consent. To give consent you need to understand what will happen to your information, so you need clear advice from your provider about what they want to do. You must be able to make your own decisions about whether you agree.

Use & Disclosure

Your health information may be shared between health service providers involved in your treatment and care. Generally, this should only happen in ways you would reasonably expect.

The provider should let you know, in general terms, how they will use your information, so you know what to expect.

Access & Correction

You may want to know what is on your health record and to see if the information is accurate. Generally speaking, you have a right to access the records a health service provider holds about you. You can ask for copies, but there may be some charges to cover the costs. Sometimes, you may only want to see what is on your record or have some of the information explained to you.

If you think there is information on your record that is not accurate, you can ask to have it corrected. This does not mean that just because you disagree with some of the information, it must be changed. However, if there is a genuine mistake or the information is out of date, you can ask for it to be corrected or updated. If you and your provider disagree about the accuracy of the information, you can ask for a statement of your views to be included in the record.



Grievance Procedure

Lockyer Valley OT is committed to listen seriously to complaints and resolve them quickly if possible. Our resolution procedures ensure you are able to air legitimate complaints, knowing that ad-hoc, vindictive or arbitrary action will not be taken against you. Please contact Shelley Robin, Principal Occupational Therapist to discuss any grievance issues. Contact number 0416 396 986 or admin@lockyervalleyot.com.au.

My Privacy, My Choice

This brochure focuses only on some of the National Privacy Principles that protect your health information. For a list of all the National Privacy Principles and more information about them, go to www.privacy.gov.au.

What do I do if I think my privacy has been breached?

1. Try to resolve the problem directly with your health service provider. Write a letter to them or send an email, explain what has happened and what you would like to see done.
2. After 30 days, if you have had no reply, or the response you get from the provider is not satisfactory, you can complain to the Federal Privacy Commissioner.

A full copy of the Australian Privacy Principles can be found at
www.oaic.gov.au/individuals/privacy-fact-sheets/general/privacy-fact-sheet-17-australian-privacy-principles

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