

## Other people who may receive information about you

In some circumstances, Northeast Health Wangaratta is obligated by law to release personal information about you.

Examples of this include:

- Presentation of your medical record as evidence in court when subpoenaed (in case of legal action);
- We have to report notifiable disease to the Department of Human Services (Victoria); and
- Release of information requested by Child Protection Worker investigating suspected child abuse or neglect;
- We regularly report other demographic data to the Department of Human Services (Victoria);
- The Department of Human Services has strict policies relating to access and the use of information to protect you and this health care organisation.

For further information about Privacy Protection:

[www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc)

[www.privacy.vic.gov.au](http://www.privacy.vic.gov.au)

## Need more information?

If you have further questions about the privacy of your records, or you wish to change your consent option, please contact our Privacy Officer during business hours on:

Tel: (03) 5722 0281

Fax: (03) 5721 3020

Wish to change or update any information?

If you are an admitted patient, please ask your nurse or ward clerk to make the change.

If you are at home, please contact the Privacy Officer who will assist you:

Privacy Officer  
Northeast Health Wangaratta  
PO Box 386  
Wangaratta Victoria 3676



PO Box 386 Wangaratta Vic 3676  
Green Street Wangaratta Vic 3677  
Telephone: (03) 5722 0111  
Facsimile: (03) 5722 0109  
Internet: [www.nhw.hume.org.au](http://www.nhw.hume.org.au)  
Email: [enquiries@nhw.hume.org.au](mailto:enquiries@nhw.hume.org.au)

Northeast Health Wangaratta Incorporating:

- Wangaratta District Base Hospital
- WJ Smith Linen Service
- Wangaratta & District Nursing Home
- Psychiatric Services - Kerferd Inpatient Unit
- Medical Imaging



# What Happens to Information About Me?



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## What happens to information about me?

When you are treated at Northeast Health Wangaratta (NHW), a record is made, containing your name, address, contact details and other information such as the nature of the problem for which you seek treatment or advice you were given. Every time you attend hospital, new information is added to your record.

### *Why is this information necessary?*

It is necessary for us to collect and keep this information to ensure that each health care professional involved in your care has all the facts and is able to provide appropriate care. Your previous history of care can help us quickly identify which treatments are likely to be safe and effective for you and also helps reduce the likelihood of repeating tests that you have already had in the past.

## Privacy Policy

The organisation's Privacy Policy is displayed at all reception desks. It is available upon request.

## How is this information protected and who has access to it?

At NHW whether you use public or private services, whether you are an inpatient or a client of outpatient services, information about you is stored in a central paper medical record which is filed in a secure location. The paper record is kept for an extended period of time. For example, if you have a baby here your records are kept for 25 years and outpatient attendance records are kept for 7 years.

Information about you is also stored within our computer system. This information allows multiple healthcare

professionals to access your information when necessary. Details such as your name, address, date of birth and telephone number, as well as pathology and diagnosis information is available to healthcare professionals who are involved in your care.

### *Your Local Doctor and Community Services*

It is routine practice that when your treatment ceases, or when you are discharged, we fax or electronically transfer a letter to your Doctor (and sometimes also to community services). This letter summarises your treatment at the hospital, your medication and any special instructions that we need your Doctor or the service to know about. If you do not wish this information to be sent, then please tell the nurse or your practitioner, as soon as possible.

### *Research Training & Quality Improvement*

Your information may be used within NHW for planning, quality improvement and research. We may contact you after your return home to gain feedback on your stay. Quality improvement activities provide the opportunity for improvements in care that benefit the community. Occasionally when we conduct a quality or planning activity we may need to use your medical record or information that may identify you. When we do this, we will always use the information in accordance with Privacy Legislation.

NHW has an Ethics Committee and requests for information that identifies you have to be approved by this committee.

NHW is a teaching hospital and you may meet students (medical, nursing and allied health) who will access the information about you. These students are bound by the same policy on confidentiality as all staff of NHW.

This organisation conforms to the guidelines issued by the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Health Services Commissioner for handling research requests.

### *To Other Health Agencies*

In an emergency situation we will release personal information about you to Health Agencies to facilitate your care. In the event that you are transferred to another facility for specialised care, your information would also be available to that facility.

### *For Further Treatment*

Whenever we receive a request from a doctor (or other hospital) for information about you, we ask for your written consent. If the person requesting the information is unable to give your written consent, then we ask for a written statement declaring that the information is necessary to provide you with further treatment. We then release the information in good faith.

### *Voluntary Visitors*

Whether you tell us your religion is entirely voluntary. You will be asked at each admission if you wish your pastoral care worker to be advised of your admission.

If you are a Department of Veterans Affairs pensioner you will also be asked if you would like us to inform the RSL welfare visitors of your admission.

### *Can I have access to Information about me?*

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 1982, you have the right to request access to your medical record and personal information held by Northeast Health Wangaratta.

Requests for access to your medical record should be made in writing to:

**Freedom of Information Officer  
Northeast Health Wangaratta  
PO Box 386  
Wangaratta Victoria 3676  
Phone: (03) 5722 0260**

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