

WHAT INFORMATION DOES ST. VINCENT'S HEALTH COLLECT ABOUT ME?

When you become a patient of St. Vincent's Health (SVH) a record is made containing information such as your name, address, date of birth, emergency contacts, GP contact details, the nature of the problem for which you seek treatment and the investigations, treatment and advice you were given. Every time you attend the hospital, new information is added to your record. Please let admission staff know if your contact details or your local doctor's contact details have changed since your last admission.

WHY IS INFORMATION COLLECTED?

SVH only collects information that is needed to ensure your best possible care and to manage the Health Service effectively. Your previous medical history will help us to identify which treatments are likely to be safe and effective for you and also to help reduce the likelihood of repeating tests that you have had in the past. To help look after your own health we ask that you provide us with accurate and complete information.

This information may also be used for research that will help provide better healthcare for the community. The St. Vincent's Health Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) only approves applications for research after undertaking thorough investigation and review. Researchers must follow strict guidelines and maintain the confidentiality of the information they access. No personal, identifiable information will leave the organisation for research without your prior consent.

HOW CAN I ACCESS MY INFORMATION?

If you want more information or if you do not understand an aspect of your care, the best person to speak to is someone in your health care team. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 1982, you have the right to make a written application for access to your medical record and personal information held by St. Vincent's Health. A small administration and copying fee may be charged. If there is information in the record that you believe is incorrect, you have the right to request that it be corrected.

Contact:

St. Vincent's Freedom of Information Officer **9288 2775**
Caritas Christi Freedom of Information Officer **9853 2344**
St. George's Privacy Officer **9272 0444**

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE A COMPLAINT ABOUT PRIVACY?

If you have any questions regarding what happens to the information about you, please speak to a staff member. If you would like a copy of our privacy policy or wish to make a privacy complaint contact:

St. Vincent's Patient Representative **9288 3108**
Caritas Christi - Patient Representative **9853 2344**
St. George's - Complaints Resolution Officer **9272 0444**

If you are not satisfied with the way in which we handle your information or deal with your privacy concerns, you may wish to make a formal complaint to the Health Services Commissioner on 8601 5225.



Privacy & your health information
St. Vincent's Health



HOW DO YOU PROTECT MY INFORMATION?

Information about you is stored in a medical record that is kept securely within our health information service.

Information about you is also located within the organisation's password-protected computer system and is available to healthcare professionals who are involved in your care.

We maintain strict policies regarding who has the authority to access your personal information. All our staff are bound by a formal code of conduct about the confidentiality of your information.

We educate and monitor staff to ensure information is handled confidentially and with respect and care.

If you attend another facility within St. Vincent's Health, some information about you may be made available to healthcare professionals at that facility. Again, this is necessary to ensure that you receive quality care and avoid duplication of tests and clinical assessments.

WHO MIGHT RECEIVE INFORMATION REGARDING MY CARE AND TREATMENT?

Your local doctor

We send a letter to your local doctor or referring hospital when you go home after a stay. The letter summarises your time at the hospital, your medication and any special instructions your doctor needs to know about.

We also usually send a letter to your local doctor following a visit to a clinic, although this is not the case for every visit.

Sometimes your local doctor will contact the hospital for additional information about your treatment. In this situation, we will only release information to the doctor whom you have specified as your local doctor on your patient registration form.

Other hospitals or new doctors

Another hospital or a new local doctor may contact us to obtain information about you, so that they can treat you safely and effectively. We will release personal information about you to assist with your care.

Support services

You may need support services when you go home. We will release relevant information to enable these services to provide their support and continue your care.

Relatives

General information about your condition may also be provided to your next of kin or a near relative, unless you request otherwise.

WILL I BE CONTACTED AFTER I GO HOME?

The St. Vincent's Foundation helps support the organisation through fundraising activities and may send you a newsletter or information on the work they do. If you do not wish to receive this information, please contact St. Vincent's Foundation on 9288 3365.

Sometimes one of your treating health professionals may write to you about a research study that you may be eligible to join. You can choose if you would like to be involved.

You may also receive a postal survey. Your response will be anonymous and confidential and it is completely voluntary. If you do not want to receive any surveys, please contact Quality Improvement on 9288 3107.

WILL ANYONE ELSE RECEIVE INFORMATION ABOUT ME?

In some circumstances, laws obligate us to release personal information about you.

Examples of this include:

- Presentation of your medical record as evidence in court when subpoenaed
- Compulsory reporting to state and federal authorities.