

Oncology North Coast Privacy Policy

PART A – PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

1.0 Oncology North Coast is committed to ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of all personal information affiliated with the Oncology North Coast's business undertakings.

1.1 Oncology North Coast follows the terms and conditions of privacy and confidentiality in accordance to the Australian Privacy Principles (**APPs**) as per schedule 1 of the *Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012 (Cth)*, forming part of the *Privacy Act 1988* ('the Act').

1.2 The purpose of this Privacy Policy is to clearly communicate how Oncology North Coast collects and manages personal information.

1.3 The point of contact regarding any queries regarding this policy is the Practice Manager, Mrs Jacqui Boyce, call on 02 6622 1865 or email reception@oncnorthcoast.com.au.

PART B – AUSTRALIAN PRIVACY PRINCIPLES

2.0 As a private sector health service provider and under permitted health situations, Oncology North Coast is required to comply with the APPs as prescribed under the Act.

2.1 The APPs regulate how Oncology North Coast may collect, use, disclose and store personal information and how individuals, including Oncology North Coast's patients may:

- address breaches of the APPs by Oncology North Coast;
- access their own personal information; and,
- correct their own personal information.

2.2 In order to provide patients with adequate care, Oncology North Coast will need to collect and use personal information. It is important to be aware that if the patient provides incomplete or inaccurate information or the patient withholds personal health information Oncology North Coast may not be able to provide said patient with the services they are requesting.

2.3 In this Privacy Policy, common terms and definitions include:

- **"personal information"** as defined by the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*. Meaning *"information or an opinion including information or an opinion forming part of a database, whether true or not, and whether recorded in a material format or not, about an individual"*

whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion"; and,

- **"health information"** as defined by the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*. This is a particular subset of "personal information" and means information or an opinion about:
 - the health or a disability (at any time) of an individual;
 - an individual's expressed wishes about the future provision of health services to him or her; or,
 - a health service provided or to be provided to an individual.

2.3.1 Personal information also includes '**sensitive information**' which is information including, but not limited to a patient's:

- race;
- religion;
- political opinions;
- sexual preferences; and or,
- health information.

2.3.2 Information deemed '**sensitive information**' attracts a higher privacy standard under the Act and is subject to additional mechanisms for the patient's protection.

PART C – TYPES OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

3.0 Oncology North Coast collects information from each individual patient that is necessary to provide said patient with adequate oncology care.

3.1 This may include collecting information about a patient's health history, family history, ethnic background or current lifestyle to assist the Oncologists in diagnosing and treating a patient's condition.

PART D – COLLECTION & RETENTION

4.0 This information will in most circumstances be collected directly from you via your patient registration form, medical referrals and correspondence, and face to face consultation.

4.1 In other instances, Oncology North Coast may need to collect personal information about a patient from a third party source. This may include:

- other health service providers.
- relatives; or,

4.2 This will only be conducted if the patient has provided consent for Oncology North Coast to collect his/her information from a third party source; or, where it is not reasonable or practical for Oncology North Coast to collect this information directly from said patient. This may include where:

- the patient's health is potentially at risk and his/her personal information is needed to provide them with emergency medical treatment.

4.3 Oncology North Coast endeavours to store and retain a patient's personal & health information on site, both electronically and in some cases in a paper form.

PART E – PURPOSE OF COLLECTION, USE & DISCLOSURE

5.0 Oncology North Coast only uses a patient's personal information for the purpose(s) they have provided the information for ***unless one of the following applies:***

- the patient has consented for Oncology North Coast to use his/her information for an alternative or additional purpose;
- the disclosure of the patient's information by Oncology North Coast is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of criminal law or a law imposing a penalty or sanction, or for the protection of public revenue;
- the disclosure of the patient's information by Oncology North Coast will prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to somebody's life or health; or,
- Oncology North Coast is required or authorised by law to disclose your information for another purpose. For example, Cancer Registry NSW

i. *Health Professionals to provide treatment*

During the patient's treatment at Oncology North Coast he/she may be referred to alternative medical treatment/services (i.e. pathology or radiology, other medical specialists and surgeons) where Oncologist may consult with senior medical experts when determining a patient's diagnosis or treatment.

Oncologists may also refer the patient to other health service providers for further treatment during and following the patient's consultation (i.e. physiotherapist, community palliative care services).

These health professionals will be designated health service providers appointed to use the patient's health information as part of the process of providing treatment. Please note that

this process will be conducted whilst maintaining the confidentiality and privacy of the patient's personal information.

ii. ***Alternative Health services***

At any point a patient wishes to be treated by an alternative medical practitioner or health care service that requires access to his/her personal/health information Oncology North Coast requires written authorisation. This written authorisation is to state that the patient will be utilising alternative health services and that these health services have consented for a transfer of personal/health information.

iii. ***Other Third Parties***

Oncology North Coast may provide your personal information regarding a patient's treatment or condition to additional third parties. These third parties may include:

- parent(s);
- child/ren;
- other relatives;
- close personal friends;
- guardians; or,
- a person exercising a patient's power of attorney under an enduring power of attorney.

Where information is relevant or reasonable to be provided to third parties, **written consent from the patient is required.**

Additionally, the patient may at any time wish to disclose that no third parties as stated are to access or be informed about his/her personal information or circumstances.

iv. ***Other Uses of Personal Information***

In order to provide the best possible environment in which to treat patients, Oncology North Coast may also use personal/health information where necessary for:

- activities such as quality assurance processes, accreditation, audits, risk and claims management, patient satisfaction surveys and staff education and training;
- invoicing, billing and account management;
- to liaise with a patient's health fund, Medicare or the Department of Veteran's Affairs, as necessary; and,

- the purpose of complying with any applicable laws – i.e. in response to a subpoena or compulsory reporting to State or Federal authorities.

5.1 If at any point or for any of the aforementioned reasons Oncology North Coast uses or discloses personal/ health information in accordance with the APPs, Oncology North Coast will provide written notice for the patient's consent for the use and/or disclosure.

PART F – ACCESS AND CHANGES TO PERSONAL INFORMATION

6.0 All requests for access and requests for changes to personal information are required to be made in writing, and addressed to :

Mrs Jacqui Boyce
Practice Manager Oncology North Coast
55 Avondale Avenue,
EAST LISMORE NSW 2480

6.1 Once an individual patient requests access to his/her personal information Oncology North Coast will respond within 10 working days of receiving the request.

6.2 The total time between receipt of a request for access and the time when access is granted shall not exceed 30 days.

6.3 You will not be permitted to remove any, or all, of the contents of your medical file. Where practicable, your oncologist will be present when access is given to your file so that he or she may go through the contents of your file, and address any concerns that you may have. A fee of \$55.00 will be charged in relation to this attendance. We advise that a rebate will not be recoverable from Medicare for this service.

6.4 All personal information will be updated in accordance to any changes to a patient's personal circumstances brought to Oncology North Coast's attention. All changes to personal information will be subject to patient's consent and acknowledgement.

PART G – COMPLAINTS HANDLING

7.0 If you would like further information about the way Oncology North Coast manages your personal information it holds, or wish to complain that you believe Oncology North Coast has breached the Australian Privacy Principles please write to:

Mrs Jacqui Boyce
Practice Manager Oncology North Coast

55 Avondale Avenue,
EAST LISMORE NSW 2480
Email: reception@oncnorthcoast.com.au

7.1 Oncology North Coast takes any complaint seriously and will deal with all complaints fairly and promptly.

PART H – PERSONAL INFORMATION AND OVERSEAS RECIPIENTS

8.0 Use of Overseas Parties:

9.0

(a) Oncology North Coast does sometimes engage with overseas entities, with which personal or health information would be transferred, appointed or disclosed. These overseas entities include:

- i. Overseas medical specialists involved in your care (if any)
- ii. Overseas private health insurance companies providing your health cover (if any)

The aforementioned entities engaged overseas are subject to the legislative requirements as stipulated by the APPs.

PART I – DISPOSAL OF PERSONAL/HEALTH INFORMATION

10.0 If Oncology North Coast receives any unsolicited personal information that is not deemed appropriate for the permitted health situation, Oncology North Coast will reasonably de-identify and dispose of said information accordingly.

10.1 If Oncology North Coast holds any personal or health information that is no longer deemed relevant or appropriate for the permitted health situation, Oncology North Coast will reasonably de-identify and dispose of said information accordingly.

PART J – ACCESS TO POLICY

11.0 Oncology North Coast provides free copies of this Privacy Policy for patients and staff to access. This revised Privacy Policy is available upon verbal request at reception.

PART K – REVIEW OF POLICY

11.1 Oncology North Coast in accordance with any legislative change will review the terms and conditions of this policy to ensure all content is both accurate and up to date.

11.2 Notification of any additional review(s) or alteration(s) to this policy will be provided to patients and staff within a fortnights notice. If change occurs patients and staff are required by Oncology North Coast to review this Privacy policy.

PART L – PATIENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I _____, acknowledge that I have read the aforementioned Privacy and Confidentiality Policy and understand the requirements of Oncology North Coast and myself in how to manage my personal information whilst attending Oncology North Coast.