

Health Information Privacy Statement

Your privacy and confidentiality will be fully respected. This fact sheet sets out why we collect your information and how that information will be used.

Purpose

We collect your health information to provide a record of care. This helps you receive quality treatment and care when you need it.

We also collect your health information to help:

- keep you and others safe
- carry out authorised research
- prepare and publish statistics
- improve government services.
- plan and fund health services
- train healthcare professionals

Confidentiality and information sharing

Your privacy and the confidentiality of your information is really important to us.

- Your health practitioner will record relevant information from your consultation in your notes. Your health information will be shared with others involved in your healthcare, and with other agencies with your consent, or if authorised by law.
- You don't have to share your health information, however, withholding it may affect the quality of care you receive. Talk to your health practitioner if you have any concerns.
- You have the right to know where your information is kept, who has access rights, and, if the system has audit log capability, who has viewed or updated your information.
- Your information will be kept securely to prevent unauthorised access.

Collection of information from other sources

Sometimes we may collect health information about you from someone other than yourself. This might happen when:

- another health provider shares information with us as part of your care
- a family member or support person provides information on your behalf
- we receive referral information from a hospital, specialist, or other health service
- information is passed to us from other government agencies where permitted by law.

When this happens, we will take reasonable steps to make you aware that this information has been collected, where it came from, and why it was collected. This is in line with Rule 3A of the Health Information Privacy Code, which came into effect on 1 May 2026.

If you have any questions about information we hold about you that was collected from another source, please speak to your health practitioner or contact our practice directly.

Information quality

We're required to keep your information accurate, up-to-date and relevant for your treatment and care.

Right to access and correct

You have the right to access and correct your health information.

- You have the right to see and request a copy of your health information. You don't have to explain why you're requesting that information but may be required to provide proof of your identity. If you request a second copy of that information within 12 months, you may have to pay an administration fee.
- You can ask for health information about you to be corrected. Practice staff should provide you with reasonable assistance. If your healthcare provider chooses not to change that information, you can have this noted on your file.
- Many practices now offer a patient portal, which allows you to view some of your practice health records online. Ask your practice if they're offering a portal so you can register.

Use of your health information

Below are some examples of how your health information is used.

- This practice is part of thePHO (The New Zealand Primary Health Organisation Limited), which may use your information for clinical and administrative purposes including obtaining subsidised funding for you.
- Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora uses your information to provide treatment and care, and to improve the quality of its services.
- A clinical audit may be conducted by a qualified health practitioner to review the quality of services provided to you. They may also view health records if the audit involves checking on health matters.
- When you choose to register for a health programme (e.g. immunisation or breast screening), relevant information may be shared with other health agencies involved in providing that health programme.
- Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora uses your demographic information to assign a unique number to you on the National Health Index (NHI). This NHI number will help identify you when you use health services.
- Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora uses health information to measure how well health services are delivered and to plan and fund future health services. Auditors may occasionally conduct financial audits of your health practitioner. The auditors may review your records and may contact you to check that you received those services.
- Notification of births and deaths to the Births, Deaths and Marriages register may be performed electronically to streamline a person's interactions with government.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

My practice may use an AI tool to assist in providing healthcare services. All data processed by AI tools will be handled securely and in compliance with data protection regulations. I will be informed about how AI tools are being used in my care and can ask questions or request more information at any time. I can also withdraw my consent at any point by notifying the practice.

Research

- Your health information may be used in research approved by an ethics committee or when it has had identifying details removed.
- Research which may directly or indirectly identify you can only be published if the researcher has previously obtained your consent and the study has received ethics approval.
- Under the law, you are not required to give consent to the use of your health information if it's for unpublished research or statistical purposes, or if it's published in a way that doesn't identify you.

Complaints

It's OK to complain if you're not happy with the way your health information is collected or used.

Talk to your healthcare provider in the first instance. If you are still unhappy with the response you can call the Office of the Privacy Commissioner toll-free on 0800 803 909, as they can investigate this further.

For further information

Visit www.legislation.govt.nz to access the Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Act 2022, Official Information Act 1982 and Privacy Act 2020.

The Health Information Privacy Code 2020 is available at www.privacy.org.nz. You can also use the Privacy Commissioner's Ask Us tool for privacy queries.

A copy of the Health and Disability Committee's Standard Operating procedures can be found at <http://ethics.health.govt.nz/operating-procedures>

Further detail in regard to the matters discussed in this Fact Sheet can be found on the Health New Zealand website at <https://www.healthnz.govt.nz/about-health/your-health-information>

Enrolling with a Primary Health Organisation (PHO)

What is a PHO?

Primary Health Organisations are the local structures for delivering and coordinating primary health care services. PHOs bring together doctors, nurses and other health professionals (such as Māori health workers, health promoters, dietitians, pharmacists, physiotherapists, mental health workers and midwives) in the community to serve the needs of their enrolled populations.

PHOs receive a set amount of funding from the government to ensure the provision of a range of health services, including visits to the doctor. Funding is based on the people enrolled with the PHO and their characteristics (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity). Funding also pays for services that help people stay healthy and services that reach out to groups in the community who are missing out on health services or who have poor health.

Benefits of Enrolling

Enrolling is free and voluntary. If you choose not to enrol you can still receive health services from a chosen GP/general practice / provider of First Level primary health care services. Advantages of enrolling are that your visits to the doctor will be cheaper, and you will have direct access to a range of services linked to the PHO.

How do I enrol?

To enrol, you need to complete an Enrolment Form at the general practice of your choice. Parents can enrol children under 16 years of age, but children over 16 years need to sign their own form.

Q & A

What happens if I go to another General Practice?

You can go to another general practice or change to a new general practice at any time. If you are enrolled in a PHO through one general practice and visit another practice as a casual patient, you will pay a higher fee for that visit. So, if you have more than one general practice you should consider enrolling with the practice you visit most often.

What happens if the general practice changes to a new PHO?

If the general practice changes to a new PHO, the practice will make this information available to you.

What happens if I am enrolled in a general practice but don't see them very often?

If you have not received services from your general practice in a 3-year period it is likely that the practice will contact you and ask if you wish to remain with the practice. If you are not able to be contacted or do not respond your name will be taken off the Practice and PHO Enrolment Registers. You can re-enrol with the same general practice or another general practice and the affiliated PHO at a later time.