

The Women's reports statistical information to DHHS relating to the services we provide. This information is summarised and does not identify you. It is used for funding, planning and improving health care quality.

If you are registered with the Australian Government's My Health Record, the Women's may upload your discharge summaries and some pathology and radiology reports to My Health Record. If you do not wish to have these clinical documents uploaded, please let us know at the start of your visit. More information is available on the My Health Record website or call the My Health Record Help line.

## CAN YOU REFUSE TO SHARE YOUR INFORMATION?

You have the right to decide not to share your information or to restrict access to your record, however, it may affect our ability to provide you with the best possible care. Talk to us if you wish to limit access to all or part of the information we hold in your EMR.

## HOW CAN YOU ACCESS YOUR INFORMATION?

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 1982 gives you the right to access your health information. Requests for access must be made in writing to the FOI Officer. See *Health Records Requests* in the Patient and Visitors section of our website for more information and to download the application form. Contact the Freedom of Information Officer for further information or to email your application.

If you find information that is incorrect or you do not agree with, you have the right to request that it be amended. This can be discussed with the Freedom of Information Officer.

The EMR also enables you to view some of your own health information through our shared patient portal called Health Hub. In most cases, you can view appointments, some test results, clinic notes and correspondence. Please note that not all departments provide these details. Information about Health Hub is available on our website.

## DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

If you have any questions regarding the privacy of your health information, contact the Women's Privacy Officer. For concerns and questions regarding your care or inappropriate use of your health information, please contact the Consumer Liaison Officer.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

**The Royal Women's Hospital**  
Locked Bag 300  
Parkville Vic 3052  
T: (03) 8345 2000  
W: [www.thewomens.org.au](http://www.thewomens.org.au)

**Freedom of Information Officer**  
T: (03) 8345 2610  
(Mon to Fri 9am–5pm)  
E: [foi@thewomens.org.au](mailto:foi@thewomens.org.au)

**Privacy Officer**  
T: (03) 8345 2610  
(Mon to Fri 9am – 5pm)  
E: [foi@thewomens.org.au](mailto:foi@thewomens.org.au)

**Consumer Liaison Officer**  
T: (03) 8345 2290/(03) 8345 2291  
(Mon to Fri 9am–5pm)  
E: [consumer.liaison@thewomens.org.au](mailto:consumer.liaison@thewomens.org.au)

**Health Hub**  
W: [www.health-hub.org.au](http://www.health-hub.org.au)

## OTHER CONTACTS

**My Health Record**  
T: 1800 723 471  
W: [www.myhealthrecord.gov.au](http://www.myhealthrecord.gov.au)

# The privacy of your health information

A brochure for patients, parents or legal guardians of women and babies attending the Royal Women's Hospital



## WHAT INFORMATION IS COLLECTED?

The Royal Women's Hospital collects information such as your name, address, contact details, information about your current and previous health conditions, medications and treatments. We also collect other information such as your Medicare number, the language you speak at home, contact details for your local doctor and any allergies that you may have.

## HOW IS IT STORED?

In August 2020, the four major public health services across the Parkville Precinct – the Royal Women's Hospital (the Women's), the Royal Children's Hospital (RCH), the Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH), Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre (PMCC) began sharing an Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system. The information we collect during your visits is stored securely in the EMR. As this system is shared with the Parkville Precinct, your health information is also updated, as required, whenever you attend any of these health services.



The EMR can be accessed by staff from all of these health services, but only when they are directly involved with your care or treatment. Go to [www.thewomens.org.au](http://www.thewomens.org.au) to find out more about the EMR.

The shared EMR is hosted on the Royal Children's and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre servers and this is where your data is physically held. The Royal Children's Hospital and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre will therefore collect health information from each health service to host, manage and support the shared EMR. The Royal Melbourne Hospital and the Royal Women's Hospital will have access to, collect and upload further information to the shared EMR in the course of treating their patients.

Information about your healthcare before the introduction of the shared EMR will continue to be stored in other information systems including paper medical records. All of this information is stored securely by the Royal Women's Hospital Health Information Services.

## PROTECTING YOUR PRIVACY

The Parkville Precinct is committed to protecting privacy by keeping the information we collect about you secure from unauthorised access, use, disclosure or loss.

All paper and electronic systems across the Parkville Precinct are managed and maintained appropriately. There are strict privacy laws, policies and procedures that are in place to govern the collection, use, release and disposal of your health information. Staff access to these systems is audited regularly by each health service to monitor compliance.

## HOW IS YOUR INFORMATION USED?

The Women's collects the health information needed to provide you with the best possible care and treatment. Your healthcare team may include the doctors and nurses looking after you through to support services like physiotherapists, pharmacists, nutritionists, interpreters and pastoral care as well as administrative staff.

Your health information may also be shared with healthcare providers outside of the Women's, including those who provide services on our behalf. These providers are bound by privacy and confidentiality obligations when handling your health information.

We may also use your information for planning, evaluation, quality improvement, research that may include clinical research trials and teaching purposes. If this information is used in reports and publications we remove any data that may identify you.

The Women's may also need to collect information about you from Medicare, your private health insurance company, travel insurance company or the Department of Home Affairs (Immigration and Citizenship) to check your eligibility for care.

## WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR INFORMATION?

If you are an inpatient, we may provide general information about your condition to your next of kin or a near relative. Let us know if you have any concerns about this.

After an emergency or outpatient visit or discharge from hospital, we prepare a summary of your visit, your medication needs and any special instructions about your care. This information will be provided to your local doctor or other community healthcare providers that you believe need this information.

Other hospitals, or new healthcare providers you visit may request information about you so that they can treat you. When this happens, we ask that they provide written approval from you before we release information. However, in an emergency situation, we will release information to assist with your care.

Your nominated local doctor, community healthcare providers and approved researchers may access certain information from the shared EMR through our online portal called Parkville Connect. This portal provides easy access to your information and helps with your shared care.

In some circumstances the Women's is required by law to release health information. Some details about patients who have specific conditions (for example, some infectious diseases and types of cancer) must be reported to databases or registries maintained securely by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Information may also be provided to a court or tribunal when subpoenaed.