

## We want to keep you informed about us

SRH Public Relations/Fundraising Department provides support to purchase equipment and enhance services for patients. They would like to send you information on the work they do. Your decision to receive this information is obtained on the 'Consent to Use and Disclosure of Information' form.

## How long is your information kept?

Stawell Regional Health follows standards set out in the General Disposal Schedule for the destruction of patient information. Generally your medical record is kept for 15 years while certain documents have to be kept permanently. All documents containing your information are destroyed in a confidential manner.

## Accessing your Health Record

You have the right to request access to your Health Record held by Stawell Regional Health through the Freedom of Information Act (1982). Requests for access to your medical record must be made to the Freedom of Information Officer. There is an application fee of \$24.40 with additional charges for photocopying.

If you would like more information about any Stawell Regional Health's privacy policies or the Freedom of Information Act please call Health Information Services on 5358 8541 or ask a nurse to contact them for you.

## Complaints

If you have a complaint that concerns privacy or confidentiality, you may contact the Senior Nurse on duty or the Chief Executive Officer.

Another option is to contact the Health Services Commissioner, an independent government funded authority on 03 8601 5200 or free call 1800 136 066. You may also contact the Aged Care Complaints Investigation Scheme on free call 1800 550552.

*A copy of the Stawell Regional Health's privacy policy can be provided to you upon request.*

*Information in this brochure is referenced to the:  
Health Records Act (2001)  
Information Privacy Act (2000)  
Freedom of Information Act (1982)*



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## Respecting your Privacy

**Protection and  
use of your  
health information.**

## Respecting your privacy

At Stawell Regional Health we respect your privacy. To protect your privacy all staff follow privacy requirements which set our standards for how we handle personal information.

### What information do we collect?

When you attend Stawell Regional Health, doctors, nurses and other health care professionals need to collect information about you, your condition and treatment outcomes. This information is important for planning your treatment and discharge. A health record is created for every new patient and every time you attend the health service new information is added to your health record.

### Why do we collect this information?

We need to collect and keep this information to provide you with suitable health care. Your health record is a source of information for the professionals involved in your care to enable them to treat and advise you appropriately.

Some information may also be used for research and planning purposes in order to provide better health outcomes for the whole community. In this case, any identifying information, such as your name and contact details, shall be removed before the information is used.

### How is your information protected?

Health information may be contained in paper or electronic records. Stawell Regional Health maintains strict policies with respect to access to your personal information. All staff employed by this health service are bound by a strict legal duty of confidentiality.

### Who has access to your information?

Stawell Regional Health staff work together for your benefit and your health information is shared among those health professionals in your treating team.

It may also be necessary for Stawell Regional Health to use some of your information for other administrative purposes related to your admission. These may include:

- Contact with external service providers involved with your care, for example pathology services.
- For billing and payment purposes if applicable, for example Medicare, health insurance, Work Cover, Transport Accident Commission and Department of Veterans Affairs.

### Who else may request access to information about me?

- After you are discharged we may notify your local doctor so that they are aware of your treatment and any special instructions related to your care. If you do not want this information to be sent to your doctor please let us know before you are discharged.
- Sometimes your local doctor may contact us for additional information about your treatment. In this case, we may give them further information. If you do not want this to occur please let us know as soon as possible.
- Authorised church representatives visit the hospital. If you wish to be included on the individual Churches visiting list, please indicate your religion on the admission form.
- Visiting Specialists

### When can information be given to other agencies without my consent?

There are very few situations when information may be shared without your consent. For example, in an emergency situation, information may need to be released about you to aid emergency treatment.

In some circumstances, we are legally obliged to provide information about you. Examples include:

- where your records have been subpoenaed for a court case
- providing health records to a law enforcement agency (eg. Police) in response to a search warrant
- reporting of notifiable diseases as appropriate and
- investigation of a complaint by the Health Complaints Commission or Aged Care Complaints Investigation Scheme.

### Research, Teaching and Quality

Stawell Regional Health may use some of your health information for the purposes of research or statistical analysis or to evaluate and monitor the health care services we provide.

Satisfaction questionnaires are often distributed to patients/residents as part of our quality improvement program.

By signing the 'Consent to Use and Disclosure of Information' form, you indicate your consent to the use of your information for these purposes. If you do not wish for this to occur please indicate this by ticking 'no' on the form.