



AHA

AUSTRALIAN  
HOMOEOPATHIC  
ASSOCIATION

*Your privacy is our business*

This leaflet aims to explain clearly how personal information about you and your health is recorded and managed in this clinic. Your homoeopath will be happy to discuss this with you.

PERSONAL INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND YOUR HOMOEOPATH



### Your personal health information

Homoeopaths consider many symptoms to be able to address the underlying causes of ill health. Your homoeopath may therefore record information about your past and present health in order to provide you with high quality care. This may include information relating to diet, sleep, lifestyle, physical observations, psychological and emotional aspects and about family medical history. This clinic will make sure that you are able to discuss your health with your homoeopath in private.

Information is called 'personal health information' if it concerns your health, medical history or past or future health care and if someone reading it would be able to identify you from this information.

This clinic ensures that your personal health information is kept private and secure. The approach used is consistent with the provisions of federal and state privacy legislation.

### Your health records

Your homoeopath will do his/her best to make sure that your health records:

- are accurate, comprehensive, well-organised and legible
- are up to date
- have enough information to allow another homoeopath to care for you
- do not contain offensive or irrelevant comments about you
- contain a summary of your care
- can be used to remind you, with your permission, to return for follow up, check-ups and reviews.

In any of the above cases, only information which is necessary to achieve the objective will be provided.

### Your access to your health information

You have access to the information contained in your health record. You may ask your homoeopath about any

aspect of your health care, including information in your record. We believe that sharing information is important for good communication between you and your homoeopath and for good health care.

Information in your record can be provided to you by way of an accurate and up to date summary of your care, for instance if you are moving away and are transferring to a new homoeopath. Do not hesitate to ask your homoeopath if you want a summary of your care for any reason. If you request a summary or direct access to your full medical record, your homoeopath will need to take out any information provided by third parties on a confidential basis. Your homoeopath will also need to consider the risk of any physical or mental harm to you or any other person which may result from disclosure of your health information.

Your homoeopath will be pleased to provide a full explanation of the health summary or medical record provided. Depending on what is involved, you may be asked to contribute to the cost of providing the information.

**PERSONAL INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND YOUR HOMOEOPATH**

### Resolving your concerns regarding the privacy of your health information

If you have any concerns regarding the privacy of your health information or regarding the accuracy of the information held by the practice, you should discuss these with your homoeopath. Inaccurate information will be corrected or your concerns noted in the records if it is not possible or desirable to alter the original record.

### Providing your information to other health professionals

The homoeopath(s) in this clinic respect your right to decide how your personal health information is used or disclosed (for example to other health professionals). In all but exceptional circumstances, personal information that identifies you will be sent to other people only with your consent. Gaining your consent is the guiding principle.

It may be important that other health professionals involved in your care are informed of relevant parts of your health record so they can best care for you. After discussion with you, your homoeopath will write a letter to the other health professional, which will either be posted or given to you to take to them. If you have

any concerns about this process, discuss them with your homoeopath.

In many group practices, it is customary for all health professionals in the clinic to have access to health records. If you have any concerns about other health professionals in this clinic being able to see your records, discuss your concerns with your homoeopath.

### Providing your information to others

Your homoeopath will not disclose your personal health information to a third party unless:

- you have consented to the disclosure, or
- this disclosure is necessary because you are at risk of harm without treatment and you are unable to give consent, for example you might be unconscious after an accident, or
- your homoeopath is legally obliged to disclose the information (for example a subpoena or court order), or
- the information is necessary to obtain health insurance rebates.

Your homoeopath will only collect information that is relevant to your care. If you are uncertain as to why information is being requested, ask your homoeopath.

### Using health information for quality improvement and research

Patient health information may be used to assist in improving the quality of care given to other patients by reviewing the treatments used.

Information that does not identify you may be used in research projects to improve health care in the community.

Where information used for research would include any data by which you might be identified, your consent will be sought before recording or publishing such data as part of a research project.

### Security of information in the practice

Some homoeopathic practices have transferred their health records to digital formats in the past few years. We will ensure that any of your personal information that is in digital form will be kept private in the same way as occurs with paper records. This will protect your record from unauthorised access.

### Further information on privacy legislation is available from:

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	1300 363 992 – <a href="http://www.oaic.gov.au">www.oaic.gov.au</a>
ACT Human Rights Commission	02 6205 2222 – <a href="http://hrc.act.gov.au/health">hrc.act.gov.au/health</a>
NSW Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC)	1800 043 159, 02 9219 7444 – <a href="http://www.hccc.nsw.gov.au">www.hccc.nsw.gov.au</a>
Office of the Health Ombudsman (Qld)	133 646 – <a href="http://www.oho.qld.gov.au">www.oho.qld.gov.au</a>
Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner (SA)	1800 232 007, 08 8226 8666 – <a href="http://www.hcsc.sa.gov.au">www.hcsc.sa.gov.au</a>
Health Complaints Commissioner (Victoria)	1300 582 113 – <a href="http://www.hcc.vic.gov.au">www.hcc.vic.gov.au</a>
Health Complaints Commissioner Tasmania	1800 001 170 – <a href="http://www.healthcomplaints.tas.gov.au">www.healthcomplaints.tas.gov.au</a>
Health and Disability Service Complaints Office (WA)	1800 813 583 – <a href="http://www.hadscow.wa.gov.au">www.hadscow.wa.gov.au</a>
Your AHA Professional member	