

OBERON MEDICAL CENTRE Email policy and procedure

Introduction

Our practice is mindful that even if patients have provided electronic contact details, they may not be proficient in communicating via electronic means and patient consent needs to be obtained before engaging in electronic communication. Electronic communication includes email, facsimile and Short Message Service (SMS).

Communication with patients via electronic means is conducted with appropriate regard to privacy

The Practice follows the RACGP recommendations to reduce the risk of interception of data and sending emails to incorrect addresses, including:

- Verification of patients email address
- Obtaining patient consent

Use of secure messaging facilities between practices where available

Procedure

Our primary reason for communicating electronically to patients is to issue appointment reminders and we verify the correct contact details of the patient at the time of the appointment being made. Our practice strictly follows a set of mandatory steps to ensure that the intended patient receives the email correspondence.

Our email address is reception@oberonmedical.com.au you can use this email address to communicate with our practice subject to the warnings discussed below.

WARNING REGARDING THE SECURITY OF EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS

We cannot guarantee the security of our email communications. There is a risk that emails and/or attachments could be read by someone other than the intended recipient (for example, as a result of widespread hacking, or because someone accesses your email account). For this reason, we discourage health providers from sending emails to us with personal information about the patients, and we discourage patients from sending emails to us with their own personal information.

However, in certain circumstances, we may agree to email you with a response to a query and/or with information or documentation that you have requested which does include your health information, provided that you have confirmed that you have considered and accepted the risks associated with email communications. Before we do so, we will need to verify your identity and your email address. We may also require you to email us confirming that you have considered and accepted the risks associated with email communications, or we may send you a **link which is password protected**.

Email Procedure

When sending an email at the patient's request, following mandatory steps to be taken:

- Call Patient and obtain email address, 3-point Check, DOB/First Name/Family Name.
- Send an email with email body text as our email policy (use the template) to confirm Patient's correct email address.
- Patient REPLYs to this Initial email to verify identity and patient's email address and consenting to proceed with receiving correspondence via email accepting risks associated with email communications.
- Upon receiving patient consent , print the email as PDF format and upload to patient file
- Encrypted email with a PIN is then sent with disclaimer.
- The practice should maintain a record of information sent via email to the patient in accordance with the email policy.

The practice uses an email disclaimer notice on outgoing emails that are affiliated with the practice stating:

UNINTENDED RECIPIENT: This email and any attachments are confidential and may be subject to legal or other professional privilege or copyright. You should not read, copy, use or disclose them without authorisation. If you are not the intended recipient any confidentiality or privilege is not waived. Please notify us by return email at your convenience and permanently delete both messages. Thank you for your assistance.