

**POLICY STATEMENT**

Hodgson Optical is committed to ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of all personal information affiliated with Hodgson Optical's business undertakings. Hodgson Optical follows the terms and conditions of privacy and confidentiality in accordance to the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) as per schedule 1 of the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012 (Cth), forming part of the Privacy Act 1988.

The purpose of this Privacy Policy is to clearly communicate how Hodgson Optical collects and manages personal information. The point of contact regarding any queries regarding this policy is the Business Manager.

**PROCEDURE**

**Australian Privacy Principles**

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As a private sector health service provider and under permitted health situations, Hodgson Optical is required to comply with the APPs as prescribed under the Act. The APPs regulate how Hodgson Optical may collect, use, disclose, and store personal information and how individuals, including Hodgson Optical patients, may:

- Address breaches of the APPs by Hodgson Optical
- Access their own personal information
- Correct their own personal information

In order to provide patients with adequate health care services, Hodgson Optical will need to collect and use personal information. It is important to be aware that if the patient provides incomplete or inaccurate information or the patient withholds personal health information Hodgson Optical may not be able to provide said patient with the services they are requesting.

In this Privacy Policy, common terms and definitions include:

- **"personal information"** as defined by the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*. Meaning *"information or an opinion including information or an opinion forming part of a database, whether true or not, and whether recorded in a material format or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion"*; and,

- **"health information"** as defined by the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*. This is a particular subset of "personal information" and means information or an opinion about:
  - the health or a disability (at any time) of an individual;
  - an individual's expressed wishes about the future provision of health services to him or her; or,
  - a health service provided or to be provided to an individual.

Personal information also includes 'sensitive information' which is information including, but not limited to, a patient's:

- race
- religion
- political opinions
- sexual preferences
- health information

Information deemed 'sensitive information' attracts a higher privacy standard under the Act and is subject to additional mechanisms for the patient's protection.

### **Types of Personal Information**

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Hodgson Optical collections information from each individual patient that is necessary to provide said patient with adequate health care services and to assist in diagnosing and treating a patient's condition. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Personal details such as name, address, date of birth
- Medicare number
- Patient medical history
- Past and present medications
- Notes made during the course of medical consultations
- Referrals to other health service providers
- Results and reports received from other health service providers

The information, the "medical record or file" is, at all times, the property of Hodgson Optical, although information may be stored on site at the practice or medical centre at which a consultation takes place.

### **Collection and Retention**

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This information will, in most circumstances, be collected directly from you via a patient registration form, treatment form, or face to face consultation. In other instances, Hodgson Optical may need to collect personal information about a patient from a third party source. This may include:

- Relatives
- Other health service providers

This will only be conducted if the patient has provided consent for Hodgson Optical to collect the information from a third party source or, where it is not reasonable or practical for Hodgson Optical to collect this information directly from said patient. This may include where the patient's health is potentially at risk and his/her personal information is needed to provide them with emergency medical treatment.

Hodgson Optical endeavours to store and retain a patient's personal and health information as a hard copy on site and /or electronically.

### **Purpose of Collection, Use & Disclosure**

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Hodgson Optical only uses a patient's personal information for the purpose(s) they have provided the information for unless one of the following applies:

- the patient has consented for Hodgson Optical to use his/her information for an alternative or additional purpose;
- the disclosure of the patient's information by Hodgson Optical is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of criminal law or a law imposing a penalty or sanction, or for the protection of public revenue;
- the disclosure of the patient's information by Hodgson Optical will prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to somebody's life or health; or,
- Hodgson Optical is required or authorised by law to disclose your information for another purpose.

### ***Health Professionals to provide treatment***

During the patient's treatment at Hodgson Optical he/she may be referred to alternative medical treatment/services (i.e. pathology or radiology) where Hodgson Optical's staff may consult with senior medical experts when determining a patient's diagnosis or treatment.

Hodgson Optical's staff may also refer the patient to other health service providers for further treatment during and following the patient's admission (i.e. outpatient or community health services).

These health professionals will be designated health service providers appointed to use the patient's health information as part of the process of providing treatment. Please note that this process will be conducted whilst maintaining the confidentiality and privacy of the patient's personal information.

### ***Alternative Health services***

At any point a patient wishes to be treated by an alternative medical practitioner or health care service that requires access to his/her personal/health information Hodgson Optical requires written authorisation. This written authorisation is to state that the patient will be utilising alternative health services and that these health services have consented for a transfer of personal/health information.

### ***Other Third Parties***

Hodgson Optical may provide your personal information regarding a patient's treatment or condition to additional third parties. These third parties may include:

- parent(s);
- child/ren;
- other relatives;
- close personal friends;
- guardians; or,
- a person exercising a patient's power of attorney under an enduring power of attorney.

Where information is relevant or reasonable to be provided to third parties, written consent from the patient is required.

Additionally, the patient may at any time wish to disclose that no third parties as stated are to access or be informed about his/her personal information or circumstances.

### ***Other Uses of Personal Information***

In order to provide the best possible environment in which to treat patients, Hodgson Optical may also use personal/health information where necessary for:

- activities such as quality assurance processes, accreditation, audits, risk and claims management, patient satisfaction surveys and staff education and training;
- invoicing, billing and account management;
- to liaise with a patient's health fund, Medicare or the Department of Veteran's Affairs, as necessary; and,
- the purpose of complying with any applicable laws – i.e. in response to a subpoena or compulsory reporting to State or Federal authorities.

If at any point or for any of the aforementioned reasons Hodgson Optical uses or discloses personal/ health information in accordance with the APPs, Hodgson Optical will provide written notice for the patient's consent for the use and/or disclosure.

### ***Access and Changes to Personal Information***

If an individual patient reasonably requests access to their personal information for the purposes of changing said information he/she must engage with the manager.

The point of contact for patient access to personal information is:

Martin Hodgson  
[martinhodgson@hotmail.com](mailto:martinhodgson@hotmail.com)

Once an individual patient requests access to his/her personal information Hodgson Optical will respond within a reasonable period of time to provide said information.

All personal will be updated in accordance to any changes to a patient's personal circumstances brought to Hodgson Optical's attention. All changes to personal information will be subject to patient's consent and acknowledgement.

If an individual requests access to his/her personal information a fee may incur.

### **Personal Information and Overseas Recipients**

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Use of Overseas Parties:

Hodgson Optical does not engage with any overseas entities, with which personal or health information would be transferred, appointed or disclosed.

### **Handling, Storage and Disposal of Health Information**

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As part of our commitment to preserving the confidentiality of the information contained in your medical record we advise that strict secure storage policies are observed in this practice. Your electronic records are accessible only by staff of this practice and are protected by a security password. Your paper records are kept in secure filing cabinets or rooms and are accessible only by practice staff. Each member of staff understands the importance of doctor-patient confidentiality.

If Hodgson Optical receives any unsolicited personal information that is not deemed appropriate for the permitted health situation, Hodgson Optical will reasonably de-identify and dispose of said information accordingly.

If Hodgson Optical holds any personal or health information that is no longer deemed relevant or appropriate for the permitted health situation, Hodgson Optical will reasonably de-identify and dispose of said information accordingly.

### **Access to Policy**

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Hodgson Optical provides free copies of this Privacy Policy for patients and staff to access, which are located on the business website. Hard copies can be provided upon request.

### **Review of Policy**

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Hodgson Optical, in accordance with any legislative change will review the terms and conditions of this policy to ensure all content is both accurate and up to date.

Notification of any additional review(s) or alteration(s) to this policy will be provided to patients and staff within 30 days notice. If change occurs patients and staff are required by Hodgson Optical to review, sign and acknowledge in writing this Privacy policy.

### **External Parties and Confidentiality**

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On occasions it is likely that external organisations will need to access our practice to allow us to maintain a functioning workplace. Further, it may be likely that the medical records kept on site will be viewed, for example, by IT contractors. Such contractors to this practice sign a

confidentiality agreement and where that external organisation provides service or advice to this practice they will be bound by the terms of the confidentiality agreement.

### **Complaints**

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It is the practice's policy that any complaint must be made in writing and addressed to the Operations Manager and marked "Private and Confidential". Upon receipt of the written complaint we will make our best endeavour to address the complaint within 60 days.