

Privacy Statement

Your Privacy - The Gladstone Women's Health Centre is committed to protecting the privacy of your personal information. We do this by ensuring the way we collect, use, store and disclose your personal information and respond to your requests to access and correct it, complies with the *Privacy Act 1988*. The information below sets out how we handle your personal information and the rights and obligations that both you and we have in relation to it.

How we Collect your Information – We primarily collect your personal information directly from you, for example through meetings, conferences, and correspondence with you, telephone conversations and emails. We will only collect information about you from third parties in specific circumstances, for example, a referral form sent to us from another Agency or telephone conversations with another Agency, if we do collect your personal information in this manner, it will only comprise of your name, contact details, and details relevant to the nature of the referral or service you are accessing.

Kinds of Information That we Hold About You – We only hold information about you if it is relevant to the service you are receiving or the program you are receiving a service from. Generally, information we hold will include your name, contact details and circumstances specific to the nature of the service you are receiving. This could include information about your family and other key relationships gathered during an intake and/or assessment process. We may hold sensitive information about you such as information about your health.

How we Hold your Information – Depending on the circumstances, we may hold your information either in hard copy or electronic form, or both. Any information we hold is secure and complies with the *Privacy Act 1988 National Privacy Principle 4.1*. All reasonable steps are taken to protect personal information from misuse and loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.

How we Use your Information – We use your personal information:

- To provide you with services.
- For purposes such as assessments, risk management and review in relation to your use of the service or program you are accessing.
- To identify and inform you of other relevant services and programs that may be of interest to you.

How we Disclose your Information – We only disclose your personal information in very limited circumstances. Generally, a disclosure will only be made for a purpose that is directly related to the service we are providing you. The only other circumstances in which disclosure may occur are where it is expressly permitted under the *Privacy Act 1988*, for example, where it is with your consent (this could include disclosure to Agencies you already have an existing relationship with) or where we are legally required to do so, such as under a court order or in situations of significant risk or harm or medical emergency, to the Police, Child Abuse Report Line or Emergency Medical Practitioners.

How we Secure your Information – We hold all hard copy and electronic records of personal information in a secure manner to ensure they are protected from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. All workers follow strict information handling procedures, and access is only available to those who require it in the provision of service to you. We delete your personal information in a secure manner once it is no longer needed or required to be kept by law.

Your Right of Access – You may request access to your personal information at any time by contacting your Counsellor directly or by sending a written request to 'The Manager' by mail to PO Box 8219, Gladstone, 4680. You do not need to provide a reason for your request. In your request, please state how you would like to obtain access.

Once we have verified your identity, your request will be forwarded to the relevant staff member who will arrange for access to be provided to you in an appropriate manner. If your personal information is held in conjunction with another individual, we can only allow you access to your information. We will follow up your request to ensure that the level of access with which you have been provided is to your satisfaction.

In rare circumstances, and only where it is permitted under the *Privacy Act 1988*, we may not be able to provide you with access to your information. Examples would include, where it will have an unreasonable impact upon the privacy of others, where it would be prejudicial to negotiations, we are holding with you or where we are required by law to withhold the information. If we are unable to provide you with access, we will state why this is so.

You may Correct your Information – If your personal information is out-of-date or incorrect, you may inform us and we will correct it for you. In the unlikely event that we disagree about the accuracy of the information and are unable to change it, you may provide us with a statement that you dispute its accuracy and we will associate the statement with your information in such a manner that it will be brought to the attention of each person who uses the information.

The **Notifiable Database Breaches** scheme requires us, and other organisations covered by the *Australian (federal) Privacy Act 1988* (Privacy Act) to notify any individuals likely to be at risk of serious harm by a data breach. We will also have to notify The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC), being the office of the Australian Privacy Commissioner (Commissioner) in case of data breach.

We May Need to Change our Privacy Policy from Time to Time – Due to changing circumstances, we may need to change our privacy policy from time to time. If we do, we will endeavour to ensure your overall level of privacy protection is not diminished and will publish the changes in our updated Privacy Policy on our website. Any actions that we have taken before the change will continue to be regulated by the Privacy Policy that existed before the changes were made.

Right to Lodge a Complaint – If you are not satisfied with how we have handled your personal information, you may lodge a complaint in writing with your Counsellor at their site contract address or with our Manager, either by mail at PO Box 8219, Gladstone, 4680 or email: manager@gladstonewomenshealth.org.au.

We will inform you of who will handle your complaint and you may contact our Manager to enquire about its progress at any time.

Further Information – If you would like further information regarding the personal information we hold about you, please contact Gladstone Women's Health Centre on 07 4979 1456 and you will be transferred to the appropriate person.