

EMAIL - FOR PATIENTS POLICY

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION CONSENT FORM

All new and existing patients in the practice will be given an information sheet on our electronic communication policy, and are asked to provide signed consent to agree or disagree to be communicated with in this manner.

It is acknowledged by the practice that consent is implied if the patient initiates electronic communication with the practice.

Reception staff are to check each patient has this information on their record on arrival to the practice, along with the verification of their name, date of birth and address.

The signed consent will be scanned and recorded in the patient electronic record and their response recorded on the practice software.

The consent form will state that the practice may use this mode of communication:

- to send reminders for a scheduled appointment.
- when the patient needs to make an appointment to review a test result;
- as a reminder that a generic preventative screening test (for example: flu vaccine, skin-check, cervical screening etc.) is due.

Further information will state that the practice:

- cannot guarantee confidentiality of information transferred via e-mail.
- will comply with the Australian Privacy Principles and the Privacy Act 1988.
- communications will not contain sensitive information, due to the risk of confidential information being accessed inadvertently or intentionally by a third party.
- communications will not contain results that only the general practitioner should be divulging in a follow-up appointment, i.e. abnormal results, education concerning a new diagnosis, etc.;
- communication will not entail promotion of any product and/or preventative health care.

Patients will be advised through the consent form that: patients should not use email to contact the practice in an emergency as per our automatic email response:

Thank you for your email. We aim to respond to emails within three business days of receipt. If you require an urgent response please call us on (*practices phone number*). Please note that our email service is not encrypted and therefore we cannot guarantee the security of our email communications.

Our practice email account for patients and stakeholders for non-urgent communication with our practice is location@prohealthcare.com.au

This email account will be routinely checked throughout the business day by the delegated authority, *Practice Manager and Office Supervisor*:

- at the start of business
- midday

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- one hour before end of business

The email message will then be forwarded to the appropriate team member for response. Communication conducted with a patient via electronic means will be added to the patient's medical record by the team member resolving the enquiry.

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