

Patient Privacy Policy

Commitment to Privacy

Canterbury Geriatric Medical Research Trust (CGMRT) is committed to being open and transparent about how we manage your personal information. Our Privacy Policy aims to communicate, in the clearest way possible, how we treat your personal & health information. We encourage you to read this Privacy Policy carefully.

In carrying out its functions and activities, CGMRT collects personal and/or health information of an individual with their consent. It is CGMRT's responsibility to ensure that overall management of that information, which includes collection, storage, use, disclosure, and disposal, complies with privacy laws and principles.

The appropriate collection, use and disclosure of patients' personal health information is fundamental to our day-to-day operations and to patient care. Protecting the privacy and the confidentiality of patient personal information is important to the physician and staff at CGM Research Trust.

We strive to provide our patients with excellent clinical care and service. Every staff member of CGMRT must abide by our commitment to privacy in the handling of personal information. This privacy statement may be updated from time to time to take account of changes in laws and technology, changes to our operations and practices, and to make sure it remains appropriate to the changing research environment.

Applicability of This Privacy Policy

Our Privacy Policy attests to our commitment to privacy and demonstrates the ways we ensure that patient privacy is protected. Our Privacy Policy applies to the personal health information of all our patients that is in our possession and control.

What is Personal Health Information?

Personal health information means identifying information about an individual relating to their physical or mental health (including medical history), the providing of health care to the individual, eligibility for clinical care in a research study, and health number.

The 10 Principles of Privacy

Our Privacy Policy reflects our compliance with fair information practices, applicable laws and standards of practice.

1. Accountability

We take our commitment to securing patient privacy very seriously. Each physician and employee associated with CGMRT is responsible for the personal information under his/her control. Our employees are informed about the importance of privacy and receive information periodically to update them about our Privacy Policy and related issues.

2. Identifying Purposes: Why We Collect Information

CGMRT collects information from participants to facilitate research studies and clinical trials. This includes collecting personal information including a person's name, address, and health information and any other information required to enable effective research by our team. Information collected may also include pathology samples such as blood and urine samples. All information collected will remain confidential and will only be used for the purpose of the research study. Information will only be disclosed with the person's permission, except where required by law. All participants must sign an ethically approved consent form (when enrolling in a research study) which will outline the collection, use and storage of the research material collected. The information collected will be securely stored in accordance with New Zealand privacy laws for a minimum of 15 years after completion of the project.

3. Consent

You have the right to determine how your personal health information is used and disclosed. For most health care purposes, your consent is implied as a result of your consent to take part in a medical research study, however, in all circumstances express consent must be written. Your written Consent will be kept in your research study specific file together with other visit notes. Patients who have withdrawn consent must sign and date the Consent to Withdrawal Form.

4. Limiting Collection

We will generally collect personal and health information by way of forms filled out by a person, face-to-face meetings, or telephone calls. In some circumstances we may be provided with personal information or health information about an individual from a third party who is authorised to provide us with this information.

The type of personal information we collect, and hold depends on the required purpose, and is generally in the form of name, address, phone number, and email address.

If you visit our website, mobile application, or mobile website, we and third parties may use cookies or other digital marketing technologies (such as tracking or analysis systems) to collect personal information about you from your computer, mobile or device. This information may include your contact details, domain name and IP address, and information about your online activity on our websites, such as web pages viewed, paths you used through our websites, options you selected, purchases, and any search terms you used. For more information, please refer to our Website Privacy Policy which can be found on www.cgmresearch.org.nz.

5. Limiting Use, Disclosure and Retention

We will use personal or health information for the primary purpose it was provided to us, which includes keeping an individual informed about CGM Research Trust and its activities. We may also use it for other secondary purposes that are directly related to the primary purpose and reasonably expected, or to which the person has consented.

We will not use a person's personal, work or health information for commercial purposes, or divulge information to any other person or company intending to use it for commercial purposes, unless the individual is advised, fully informed and consents in writing, to such use.

We will not disclose personal or health information unless it is required or authorised under law, or if it is imperative for health and safety reasons.

The information we request from you is used for the purposes defined. We will seek your written consent before using the information for purposes beyond the scope of the posted Privacy Statement. Under no circumstances do we sell patient lists or other personal information to third parties. There are some types of disclosure of your personal health information that may occur as part of CGMRT fulfilling its routine obligations and/or practice management. This includes disclosure to consultants and suppliers to the Trust, but strictly on the basis and understanding that they abide by our Privacy Policy, and only to the extent necessary to allow them to provide business services or support to CGMRT. We will retain your information only for the time it is required for the purposes we describe and once your personal information is no longer required, it will be destroyed.

6. Accuracy

We endeavour to ensure that all decisions involving your personal information are based upon accurate and timely information. While we will do our best to base our decisions on accurate information, we rely on you to disclose all material information and to inform us of any relevant changes.

7. Safeguards: Protecting Your Information

CGMRT is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of the personal/health information we hold. We protect your information with appropriate safeguards and security measures. CGMRT maintains personal information in a combination of paper and electronic files. Recent paper records concerning individuals' personal information are stored in files kept onsite at our office. Older records may be stored securely offsite.

Access to personal information will be authorized only for the physicians and employees associated with CGMRT, and other agents who require access in the performance of their duties, and to those otherwise authorized by law.

We provide information to health care providers acting on your behalf, on the understanding that they are also bound by law and ethics to safeguard your privacy.

Our computer systems are password-secured and constructed in such a way that only authorized individuals can access secure systems and databases. If you send us an e-mail message that includes personal information, such as your name included in the "address", we will use that information to respond to your inquiry. Please remember that e-mail is not necessarily secure against interception. If your communication is very sensitive, you should not send it electronically unless the e-mail is encrypted, or your browser indicates that the access is secure.

8. Openness: Keeping You Informed

CGMRT has prepared this plain-language Privacy Policy to keep you informed. You may view a copy by visiting our website at www.cgm.org.nz. If you have any additional questions or concerns about privacy, we invite you to contact us by phone and we will address your concerns to the best of our ability.

9. Access and Correction

We want to ensure that the personal or health information we hold is accurate, complete, and up to date. If a person believes that any of the personal or health information that we hold is inaccurate, incomplete, or irrelevant, or wishes to obtain access to the personal or health information held by CGMRT, please contact CGMRT using the details provided on the 'Contact Us' page of the CGMRT website.

With limited exceptions, we will give you access to the information we retain about you within a reasonable time, upon presentation of a written request and satisfactory identification. We may charge you a fee for this service and if so, we will give you notice in advance of processing your request

If you find errors of fact in your personal health information, please notify us as soon as possible and we will make the appropriate corrections. We are not required to correct information relating to clinical observations or opinions made in good faith. If we deny your request for access to your personal information, we will advise you in writing of the reason for the refusal and you may then challenge our decision.

10. Challenging Compliance

We encourage you to contact us with any questions or concerns you might have about your privacy or our Privacy Policy. We will investigate and respond to your concerns about any aspect of our handling of your information. In most cases, an issue is resolved simply by telling us about it and discussing it. You can reach us at:

Anita Meyer (Privacy Officer)

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