

Confidentiality

General Statement of the Policy

Information provided to this pharmacy by customers about personal matters will be treated as information to be held in trust, and will not be disclosed to persons who are not involved in providing continuing care without the express consent of the customer involved, or where appropriate, the consent of the customer's carer.

Information provided to the pharmacy by staff including personnel files will be treated as information to be held in trust. Information will not be disclosed to persons who are not involved in a direct management role of the staff member or Human Resources/Payroll staff. Emergency contact details will be made available to appropriate staff members if required.

Definitions

1. Information refers to all forms of information whether written, spoken, electronically produced, or in any other form.
2. Personal matters include:
 - Information about medical conditions whether provided directly by customers or their agents, or indirectly (for example, information deduced from medication use);
 - Information about medicines used, or about medication histories;
 - Information about personal relationships;
 - Information about disabilities;
 - Any other information that can reasonably be taken to be personal or sensitive.
3. Disclosure includes the transfer of information to other professionals (e.g. Medical Practitioners) and discussions with other staff members.

Application

1. When information is transferred with the consent of persons or their carers, they shall be provided with copies of the information.
2. Copies of any information transferred will be filed in the pharmacy and available for access to the persons involved, their carers, or other professionals to provide continuity of care.
3. Written or other similar information will be handled in such a way that unauthorised persons cannot view it, and will only be accessible to staff who have a legitimate need to know in order to provide continuing care.
4. Conversations between staff members within the pharmacy concerning customers' personal matters must be conducted in such a manner that other customers cannot easily overhear them, and no conversations will be held in any public place regarding customers' personal information.
5. Whenever information is transferred from one person to another it will always be done in a respectful manner, and only such information as is necessary to ensure good and continuous care will be offered.
6. Confidential material will be shredded by the relevant pharmacy staff on a regular basis. This includes any information with a customer's name and address details.

7. All personnel files are kept in confidential location/s and accessed only by authorized staff. Staff members have the authority to look at the content of their own personnel file at any time.

Procedure

Exceptions

This policy does not apply in situations where:

1. The safety of the person would be compromised by not disclosing information (in which case the senior duty pharmacist should seek direction from appropriate agencies eg. The person's medical adviser, psychiatrist, mental institution etc.).
2. The safety of others would be compromised by not disclosing information (in which case, it is likely that both the police and those who are endangered may need to be notified).
3. Staff have knowledge of criminal activity (in which case the police need to be notified).

Responsibility for application

Responsibility for the application of the policy rests with the senior duty pharmacist for customers and the Pharmacy Manager for staff. In cases where doubt exists about how confidential materials should be handled, or whether confidential information should be recorded, or should be disclosed to others, non-pharmacist staff are required to report information to the senior duty pharmacist.

Breaches of the policy

Where breaches of the policy are identified, the senior pharmacist will take all reasonable steps to remedy it. These may, depending on the circumstance, include informing the customer, making an appropriate apology, taking any steps to ensure future breaches do not occur, or any other reasonable action.

Caveat

The provisions of this policy do not remove any responsibilities or rights to ensure compliance with State or Federal Acts regarding Privacy, Freedom of Information or any other relevant legislation.