



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND YOU

If you need an interpreter, please ask a staff member to book an interpreter, ask a staff member whether this information sheet is available in your preferred language, or phone the Telephone Interpreter Service on 9605 3056. Interpreter services are free.

What is Freedom of Information?

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act gives you the right to request access to documents held by Eastern Health.

Eastern Health must give you access to the records you request, unless they fall within one of the “exemption” categories in the FOI Act. If Eastern Health denies you access to any documents, it will explain its reasons, and advise you how to request a review of that decision.

What information does Eastern Health hold about me?

Your medical record at Eastern Health contains information collected to assist clinicians to provide you with appropriate treatment and care, and information about that treatment and care.

Eastern Health sites include Angliss Hospital, Box Hill Hospital, Healesville Hospital & Yarra Valley Health, Maroondah Hospital, Peter James Centre, Wantirna Health, and Yarra Ranges Health.

Eastern Health services include emergency, general medicine, maternity, rehabilitation, aged care, palliative care, mental health, and drug and alcohol services.

Eastern Health holds medical records in a variety of formats and systems, including electronic and paper records.

How long does Eastern Health keep my information?

Eastern Health keeps records for the timeframes required under the Public Records Act and related laws. Old records are routinely destroyed in accordance with legal requirements.

How do I apply?

Applications must be in writing to the Eastern Health FOI Service. You can use the application form (available on the Eastern Health website or from Health Information Services at each site) or simply write a letter.

You can ask for a copy of the record, or to view the record. Your request must clearly identify which documents you want to access.

Applications must be sent with the application fee (see below) and proof of your identity (e.g. copy of driver’s licence).

Please forward your application to:

Eastern Health Freedom of Information Service
Health Information Services
Maroondah Hospital
PO Box 135
Ringwood East VIC 3135

Phone: (03) 9871 3170
Fax: (03) 9871 1653
Email: foi@easternhealth.org.au

Can I obtain someone else's records?

If you want access to another person's records, please provide their written consent, or any legal documents that support your request, such as Tribunal or Court orders, power of attorney documents, or a death certificate. This will assist Eastern Health to determine whether or not to give you access to the records.

How much will it cost?

For each request, there is an application fee of \$28.90. The application fee can be waived if you provide evidence of hardship, such as a copy of a current Health Care Card or Pension Card. If the application fee is not paid or waived, your request will not be processed.

Additional charges may apply, depending on the circumstances of your request, such as a search fee (\$21.65 per hour or part of an hour), photocopying costs (\$0.20 per A4 page), CD costs (\$10 each), or viewing costs (\$5.40 per quarter hour). If you are required to pay these charges, you will be notified in writing. In many cases, these fees are waived (such as where a patient with a Health Care Card or Pension Card is requesting access to his or her own medical record).

How long will it take?

Acknowledgement of your application will be sent to you right away. After Eastern Health receives your valid application it has 30 days to send a decision, or 45 days if it needs to consult other services or people. Longer timeframes can apply if you agree.

Any outstanding charges relating to your request must be paid before the records are sent to you. Your documents will be sent via registered post.

Accreditation

Eastern Health is accredited by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards.



Protecting Your Privacy

Eastern Health is committed to protecting your privacy. We will keep your personal information secure and disclose information about you only when required or permitted by law. We comply with relevant privacy legislation.

If you would like more information, please ask a staff member or visit our website www.easternhealth.org.au.

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5 Arnold Street, Box Hill, Victoria 3128

Phone 1300 342 255

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If you have any feedback or suggestions on how to improve this information sheet, please contact Eastern Health's Centre for Patient Experience by emailing feedback@easternhealth.org.au or calling 1800 327 837.