What you can expect

- We need your consent to collect information about you.
- We need information from you to be able to provide you with reliable results and your doctors with helpful advice.
- We will be fair in the way we collect information.
- Most information is collected at the time that a pathology request is written out by your doctor. Your doctor will generally explain why he or she is recording the information and where it is going to.
- Where you visit a pathology collection centre and more information is sought you will be asked if it is OK to collect that information.
- Pathology practices have their record systems inspected for laboratory accreditation and they must be reliable and secure.
- The best way to get your results is in consultation with your doctor so they can be explained in the context of your health care.
- You may, however, request access to information we hold about you.
- You may discuss any concerns you may have about how we handle your information. You should speak to your pathology practice first. Contact information is provided on the back page.
- More information about the pathology information life cycle is given inside…

Further Information And Complaints

HOBART PATHOLOGY

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PRIVACY OFFICER - (03) 62 237 513
privacy@dspl.com.au

AAPP www.aapp.com.au/privacy

Federal Privacy Commissioner
Hotline 1300 363 992
www.privacy.gov.au

This brochure has been produced by the Australian Association of Pathology Practices (AAPP) for its members. The AAPP believes but makes no warranty that this reflects best practice under the National Privacy Act.

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PRIVACY and PATHOLOGY

OUR POLICY - TO PROTECT YOU

Pathology is a specialist medical service. The quality of our service depends on information, including what we collect from you. This brochure shows what you might expect from this pathology practice under the National Privacy Principles.

HOBART PATHOLOGY

THE NATIONAL PRIVACY PRINCIPLES

Protecting privacy throughout the PATHOLOGY information life cycle

Information comes from

- Individual (subject)
- Requester (& staff)
- Responsible person
- Other health service providers including hospitals, clinics & other pathology practices
- Internal records
- Insurers & institutions
- Government instrumentalities including Department of Veterans Affairs, Transport Accident Commission (Vic), Workcover, Prison, Police, Courts...
- Organisations eg. Commercial and Occupational Health such as in mining

Collecting Information

Pathology is a specialist medical service

NPP 1 - Collection

Information is collected to:

- Link pathology reports to individuals & their health care providers
- Ensure appropriate testing
- Make a diagnosis & interpret results
- Seek confirmation or to fulfil testing requirements from third parties where appropriate
- Have available for future reference in determining trends or significant changes
- Allow billing & payments
- Fulfil regulatory & public health requirements
- Assure quality & improve processes

NPP 10 - Sensitive Information

Sensitive information is collected, stored, used and accessed with due regard for privacy in accordance with the 'Privacy Policy in Community Pathology' published by the AAPP

- An individual can choose to suppress some information & to limit the transfer of reports to specified parties
- In some circumstances responsible persons can give consent for individuals

NPP 8 - Anonymity

An individual may have a test anonymously but this can be dangerous. An individual choosing to do this must be aware of the potential consequences including that:

- Diagnosis and advice may be seriously impaired with consequent adverse medical outcomes
- There may be a mismatching of the individual's results
- There must be an acceptance that there is a consequent limitation to the liability of the pathology practice
- It may result in breakdown in good public health practice
- It can not be claimed under Medicare

Storage & Maintenance

NPP 3 - Data Quality

- Every effort is made to keep an individual's information accurate, up to date and complete
- You are entitled to see your records and change them to improve the accuracy of the information

NPP 4 - Data Security

- Pathology information has restricted access and any changes are tracked
- Accreditation of pathology laboratories requires physical and electronic security of information

Access (by the individual)

NPP 6 - Access & Correction

- The preferred way to get your pathology results is in consultation with your doctor, where results can be explained in the context of your health management
- Individuals do, however, have the right of access to their pathology records
- A written request is required and, depending on how old the information is, there may be a charge
- Information collected or generated before 21 December 2001 may not be available
- To protect your privacy individuals may require positive identification

Use of Information and Disclosure

Use of information within the organisation and disclosure to third parties

NPP 2 - Use & Disclosure

and

NPP 9 - Transborder Data Flows

- Information is used within the laboratory for producing results and advice and delivering these to your specified health providers
- In the routine pathology process health information may be disclosed to another provider for the purposes of getting a second opinion, or where the test is a special one, the test (with the associated information) may be referred to another more appropriate laboratory
- In very rare instances this may be outside of Australia, in which case your privacy will continue to be protected
- There are some statutory requirements for reporting test results to registries
- Information is used for billing

NPP 7 - Identifiers

- Government identifiers are used where necessary for billing
- Any identity information may be used by a pathology practice to ensure that an individual and their results are linked in confidence

Openness NPP 5 - Openness

The Australian Association of Pathology Practices (AAPP) and its members have produced a document 'Privacy Policy in Community Pathology' describing best practice in privacy in this area. The AAPP believes the policies are compliant with the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000. This diagram is an extract.