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**Accessing Your Medical Records**

**How to request access**

Contact **Good Health Greenhills** to request access. Only you or another person you’ve **authorised**, such as a legal guardian or **authorised** representative, can make the request.

You may be asked to put your request in writing and for information that identifies you. You may be asked to include:

* your name and address
* the health information you want
* how you’d like to access the health information (such as, by email, paper copies or if you just want to look at the information)
* if you authorise a person or organisation to access the health information on your behalf

**When should you get a response to your request?**

A health service provider should respond to a request for access to your health information within a reasonable period. We generally think 30 days is a reasonable period.

**Can A Health Service Provider Refuse Your Request?**

A health service provider can refuse to give you access to your health information in some situations, such as if:

* it may threaten your or someone else’s life, health or safety
* it may impact someone else’s privacy
* giving access would be unlawful

If giving you certain information would impact someone else’s privacy, a health service provider could block out that part and give you the rest of the information. If it’s not possible to give information directly to you because of a concern for your health or safety then they might give access through an agreed third party.

If your health service provider refuses to give you access they must give you a written notice telling you why, and how you can complain about their refusal.

**How Will You Receive your Information?**

You can ask for your health information to be given to you in a particular way — by email, phone, hard copy, electronic record, in person or sending a copy to another health service provider.

If you ask for access in a way that is unreasonable or not practical, a health service provider can give it to you another way — such as on a USB stick rather than paper copies, giving you a summary of the information or allowing you to view it. Another option is to use an agreed third party.

If a health service provider refuses to give you access in the way you requested they must give you a written notice telling you why, and how you can complain about their refusal.

**Is there a charge?**

A health service provider may charge a fee for giving you access, but this charge can’t be excessive. **Good Health Greenhills Request for Records Fee is $35.**

The charge may include the cost of:

* staff searching for, locating and retrieving the requested information, and deciding which health information is relevant to the request
* staff reproducing and sending the health information
* the postage or materials involved in giving access
* using an intermediary, if necessary

**When you change your health service**

**Provider?**

If you want access to your health information because you are changing to another health service provider, your current health service provider might prefer to transfer your record to the new health service provider rather than giving you the information directly.

**If your doctor has retired or died**

Whether a doctor is required to retain patient records depends on the law in the relevant state or territory. For example, in the ACT, NSW and Victoria, privacy law requires a health service provider to keep records for 7 years or, in the case of a child, until the child turns 25. For more information about state and territory privacy laws, see [Privacy in Your State](https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-in-your-state).

If a doctor is part of a larger practice and has retired or died, the practice may retain the doctor’s records. Sometimes, when a doctor has died, the records will become the property of the executor of the doctor’s estate and the only way a patient can access the records is to locate the executor and seek a copy of the records. However, if the doctor used [My Health Record](https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/health-information/my-health-record/about-my-health-record) you may be able to continue to access your medical records on My Health Record, even though the doctor has retired or died.

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www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/health-information/access-your-health-information