Email Policy

Lockridge Medical Centre's Email Policy is in place to ensure reasonable steps are taken to ensure the communication of personal health information via email is safe and secure. It is, however, critical that GPs, staff and patients are aware of the associated risks with using email to send personal health information.

Purpose

Lockridge Medical Centre is receiving requests from patients to send personal health information via email. the Practice is required to adhere to the Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act) and as such has protocols and precautions in place to ensure this information is sent as securely as possible, with informed consent obtained from the patient.

Scope

This policy applies to all requests for sending of personal health information to a patient via email. This policy applies to all employees of Lockridge Medical Centre.

Method

All email communication undertaken with patients require the following:

1. Risks associated with sending personal health information are explained to the patient

2. The patient accepts the risks and completes patient email consent form.

3. Patient emails consent form verifying the email by the practice;

4. If the document contains sensitive information, or if the patient requests password protection, the document containing personal health information is converted to PDF and password protected prior to sending using Adobe Acrobat.

5. The password for accessing the document is sent to the patient via SMS on mobile number verified by the practice.

With these controls in place the risk is considered **LOW** in accordance with the RACGP *Privacy and Security Risk Matrix.*

Third party requests

In the event an allied health provider, specialist or other health care professional requests information to be sent via email, the procedure for sending password protected pdf files via email must also be followed. *See procedure flow chart*

Breach

In the event of a privacy breach, Lockridge Medical Centre Data Breach Response Procedure is to be followed.