

Maternal and Child Health Service Privacy Fact Sheet

What happens to information about you, your child and your family while you are a client of the Victorian Maternal and Child Health service?

Who are we?

The Victorian Maternal and Child Health Service (MCH), is a universal health service for children from birth to school age, focusing on promotion of health and development, prevention, early detection and intervention for physical, emotional and social factors affecting young children. While the Service is primarily for the child, we also focus on the health and wellbeing of the mother, and the family, in the context of the child's health and wellbeing.

MCH Nurses are registered nurses and midwives with post graduate qualifications in maternal and child health. The MCH Service is provided in partnership between local government authorities and the Victorian Government.

What information do we collect about you?

We keep your name and contact details on your/your child's record. Other details such as your/your child's care plan and information about the services you receive are recorded each time you visit.

Why do we collect your information?

The information we collect helps us to keep up-to-date details about you/your child's needs, so we can care for you/your child in the best possible way.

Who else sees your information?

Your information can only be seen by the professionals in this service involved in your/your child's care. We also use the information to better manage and plan this service.

De-identified information is also provided to the Department of Health and Human Services to improve delivery of the MCH service across the state. Otherwise, we only release information about you/your child if you agree or if required/permitted by law.

Examples of where we may be required by law to release your/your child's information include where required under legislation or when the council is ordered by a court to produce/release this information.

Information may also be shared under the Child Information Sharing Scheme (only with specific organisations and services under this scheme), to protect the wellbeing and safety of your child.

What say do you have in what information is collected?

We rely on the information you give us to help provide the right care for you/your child. If you decide not to share some of your/your child's information, this is your right, but it may affect our ability to provide you with the best possible services. Talk to your maternal and child health nurse if you wish to change or cancel your consent.

How will your information be protected?

We are committed to protecting the confidentiality of your/your child's record. The privacy of your information is also protected by law (most notably the Health Records Act 2001). This Act protects health information from misuse, loss, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure, as well as transfer of information to another health provider (eg another MCH service), and permanent destruction/de-identification of health information that is no longer needed. We treat your information in the strictest confidence and store it securely in a secure records system.

Can you access your health record?

Yes, you have a right to request access to your/your child's health record through a Freedom of Information request, and can ask for it to be corrected if necessary.

Any other questions?

Please talk to your maternal and child health nurse if you have any other questions or complaints about what happens to your information while you are a client of the Victorian MCH service, or if you wish to access your record.