

Privacy Statement – Department of Health, Victoria – Victorian Rural Generalist Program

Our obligations under privacy laws

The Department of Health, Victoria (ABN 74 410 330 756) (**Department**) established the Victorian Rural Generalist Program (**VRGP**) (including the VRGP Co-ordination Unit and the VRGP Clinical Leads Unit) to support a state-wide end-to-end training program for the rural generalist medical workforce to train, work and live in rural and regional Victoria.

This Privacy Statement applies to how the Department (and the VRGP Co-ordination Unit and VRGP Clinical Leads Unit) will handle the personal and health information of VRGP applicants and participants.

The Department endorses fair information handling practices and uses of information in compliance with its obligations under the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) and the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic).

Personal and health information collected for the purposes of the VRGP will be used only for the intended purpose. Where the intention includes confidentiality, information will be treated as such unless otherwise required by law.

Matters covered in this Privacy Statement

This Privacy Statement explains how the Department protects the personal information and health information of VRGP applicants and participants: doctors, their partner and/or dependant(s), supervisors and others. It also explains how the Department:

- collects and uses that personal or health information;
- to whom personal or health information collected under the VRGP is usually disclosed;
- stores and maintains VRGP participant personal and/or health information; and
- allows VRGP participants and their families to access or correct their personal or health information.

In this Privacy Statement:

- **“personal information”** means information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database), that is recorded in any form and whether true or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion.
- **“sensitive information”** has the meaning given in Schedule 1 of the IPPs, and includes information relating to health, religion, race or ethnic origin.
- **“health information”** has the meaning given in the HRA and includes information or an opinion about the physical, mental or psychological condition of an individual or a disability.

Matters not covered by this Privacy Statement

Aside from the VRGP, the Department also provides a wide range of other services, including providing its funded and contracted health services and other providers with access to information, education and training materials and details of other relevant standards, guidelines, policy, news and events.

This Privacy Statement is specific to the VRGP, and **does not cover** the protection of personal or health information in the course of providing those other services. Please refer to the Department’s general privacy policy, which is available for viewing at the Department website: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/publications/privacy-policy>.

The Postgraduate Medical Council of Victoria (**PMCV**) also separately collects personal information for the purposes of the VRGP. The PMCV owns an Allocation and Placement Service System (**APS System**) which provides for online assistance for matching candidates/applicants to relevant positions in hospitals, health services and other organisations. This Privacy Statement **does not cover** the collection use, disclosure or storage of personal information by PMCV. Please refer to PMCV's [PMCV Privacy Policy www.vicruralgeneralist.com.au Privacy Policy | Victorian Rural Generalist Program \(vicruralgeneralist.com.au\)](http://www.vicruralgeneralist.com.au/PrivacyPolicy).

Types of personal information collected

The Department may collect the following types of personal or health information for the purposes of the VRGP:

- the name, date of birth, contact details of the doctor and/or his partner (if applicable);
- the name and date of birth of a doctor's child, aged care relative or any other person in respect of which the doctor has legal responsibility and who will be moving with the doctor for the term of the VRGP placement (**Dependent**);
- a doctor's residency status;
- a doctor's Medical Board of Australia Registration Number and Medical Intern Placement Number;
- current and past education;
- qualifications and employment history (along with other information included in their curriculum vitae);
- once enrolled, VRGP Clinical lead feedback in relation to a doctor's VRGP training;
- once enrolled, geographical location, and details relating to community integration and linkages, and any family assistance provisions provided by the Department at the doctor's request;
- once enrolled, end of training practice location and rurality of practice as identified under the Monash Modified Model zones;
- the names and contact details of any referees;
- the name and contact details of the doctor's supervisor; and
- the name and address of the CEO of the health service(s) providing placements.

The Department may also collect sensitive information such as details of a doctor's race or ethnic origin. Your consent will be obtained before we collect sensitive information, unless we are otherwise authorised to collect it under the PDP Act.

Health information such as details of any disability or psychological conditions may also be collected by us in limited circumstances, for example where you choose to disclose your medical information (or your Dependent's health information) for the purposes of applying for special, or to receive additional support from us, such as disability support.

How information is collected

Generally, the Department collects personal information directly from individuals, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable for us to do so. Information may be collected through forms or agreements, by telephone, in person or online via this website.

Examples of when it may be unreasonable or impracticable for us to collect information directly from doctors or their partners is when:

- doctors apply directly to PMCV. This applies to all doctors who enter the Victorian Rural Preferential Allocation match (part of the Victorian Intern Match) and the Rural Generalist Advanced Match. In such cases, the Department will collect information from PMCV and its APS System; or
- the Department has engaged contractors to collect information on its behalf or on behalf of the VRGP; or

- the information is already available on public sources, such as the national health practitioner register on Ahpra.

Website visitors who are not VRGP participants

The Department collects data from our VRGP website using various technologies, including cookies. A cookie is a text file that our website sends to your browser which is stored on your computer as a tag identifying your computer to us. You can set your browser to disable cookies. However, some parts of the VRGP website may not function properly (or at all) if cookies are disabled.

Purposes for which personal or health information is used

The Department only uses personal and health information for the primary purpose for which it is collected, as set out below, or for a secondary purpose related to the primary purpose for which you would reasonably expect the Department to use the collected information.

The Department and the VRGP will not use your information for an unrelated secondary purpose unless the Department obtains your written consent, is permitted to do so under the PDP Act or HRA or another exception applies. Examples of exceptions could include where it is impracticable to obtain your consent and the Department and the VRGP believes that collecting, using or disclosing your information is necessary to lessen a serious threat to the life, health or safety of any individual.

Where you have ticked the relevant box in your consent form, in the event you are unsuccessful at first instance in your application for a placement, the Department and VRGP may retain your name and email address for a period of up to 2 years from the date of your consent for the purpose of being contacted by VRGP if a placement subsequently becomes available.

Doctors

The Department collects personal or health information about doctors to:

- match doctors to available VRGP training positions at Victorian health services;
- communicate with doctors, including to provide confirmation of applications, notification of additional information required, confirmation of the information provided, reminders and to make allocation offers;
- maintain, correct or update our participant records;
- liaise with supervisors, medical training organisations or colleges where needed;
- improve our services, in particular our data-base, the VRGP-CRM, through monitoring, quality improvement activities, audits, surveys and program evaluations;
- undertake training, education and research for the VRGP;
- provide support services to you and your family, partner or children during the placement such as schooling assistance or community integration;
- track your geographical location and progress through-out the placement and at the end of your placement;
- assess an application for special consideration based on a health condition;
- report, monitor, evaluate, model or forecast for the VRGP to other agencies within the Department, such as to the State-wide Reference Committee, Department of Health, or the Commonwealth Department of Health, and to any external contractors engaged by the Department of Health Victoria to assist it in fulfilling its reporting obligations.

Partners and Dependents

The Department will only use the personal or health information provided by a partner of the doctor participating in the VRGP, or their Dependents, to link and communicate with them and service providers as to services in the rural and regional community which the partner has requested such as schooling and education, employment, or disability support services.

Their de-identified information (as far as possible) information may also be used to:

- improve our services, in particular, the VRGP or the database on which information is stored, through monitoring, quality improvement activities, audits, surveys and program evaluations;
- undertake training, education and research for the VRGP; and/or
- report, monitor, evaluate, model or forecast for the VRGP to other organisations within the Department of Health or to the Commonwealth Department of Health in accordance with statutory or contractual requirements.

Supervisors

The names and contact details of supervisors of doctors undertaking Rural Generalist training will be used for the primary purposes of verifying the doctor's training and experience and communicating with the VRGP Clinical Leads.

The supervisor's de-identified information may also be used to improve our services, undertake training, education and research for the VRGP or to report, monitor, evaluate model or forecast for the VRGP to other public sector entities.

Others

The Department will only use information collected about others for the purpose that we have collected the information. For example, a referee's information will only be used for the purpose of obtaining a reference about the doctor from that individual.

Disclosure of personal or health information

We may share personal information within the Department and with third parties. The types of third parties to whom we may disclose your personal information include:

- A doctor's health services' Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or training supervisor for the VRGP training period;
- Your VRGP Clinical Lead (for training purposes);
- PMCV for the purpose of matching you and other applicants to appropriate training posts;
- The medical college(s) you identify as where you would like to undertake an accredited training program and the providers of that training program (for example, Registered Training Organisation);
- the Department of Health, Queensland. If you are enrolled in a VRGP training program, your information will be transferred to Queensland, and housed within, a networked application owned by the Department of Health, Queensland (but licensed to the Department of Health, Victoria). Limited authorised Queensland Department of Health employees will have access to your information for the purposes of providing ICT support services and to ensure continued operation and improvement of the data-base; and
- the State-wide Reference Committee (Department of Health, Victoria), or the Commonwealth Department of Health, for the purpose of fulfilling reporting requirements, securing funding and improving the VRGP. Information disclosed to such entities will be aggregated and de-identified where possible;

- our contracted service providers who assist us in administering the VRGP or fulfilling our reporting requirements.

We may also disclose your personal information to your authorised representatives or third parties acting on your behalf, for example your solicitor or interpreter.

If you do not provide personal information

You are not required to give the Department your personal or health information listed above. However, if you choose not to provide the information, you will not be eligible to participate in the VRGP. If you choose not to provide your family or dependent's personal or health information we may be unable to provide you or your family with the educational, occupational, community or other support you have requested.

Direct marketing

The Department and the VRGP may send you direct marketing about:

- improvements or changes to the VRGP-CRM on SIMS
- opportunities being offered through the VRGP-CRM on SIMS
- its other projects, activities, services and health system developments.

If the Department and the VRGP collected your details from you personally, the Department and the VRGP will reasonably expect that you agreed to receive direct marketing. The Department and the VRGP will offer an opt-out procedure so that you can unsubscribe from all future marketing communications.

If the Department and the VRGP proposes to use information about you collected indirectly to send you direct marketing, the Department and the VRGP will seek your consent unless an exception applies under the Privacy Act. If you do not wish to receive any direct marketing, please contact the Department and the VRGP to opt-out at any time.

Please note that the Department and the VRGP will also comply with other laws that are relevant to direct marketing, including the *Spam Act 2003 (Cth)* and the *Do Not Call Register Act 2006 (Cth)*.

Storage of personal information

Your personal information (and health information, if any) will be stored on a data-base housed within a networked application in Queensland which is owned by the Department of Health, Queensland, known as the VRGP-CRM database.

The Department of Health, Queensland, will have limited access to the information stored on the VRGP-CRM data base. Only authorised Department of Health Queensland team members will be able to access the information from time to time as required from time to time to resolve technical or logistical issues.

Third parties including PMCV will **not** be able to access the VRGP-CRM database.

Maintenance and security of personal information

All personal and health information is securely stored by the Department using appropriate physical and/or electronic security technology, settings and applications, and by ensuring staff dealing with personal information are trained in our privacy policies and procedures. These policies are designed to protect personal information from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure, and from misuse, interference and loss.

There are always inherent risks in transmitting information via the internet and the Department does not have the ability to control the security of information collected and stored on third party servers. However, in relation to the Department's and QLD Health's own servers, all reasonable steps are taken to ensure data security.

[Access to and correction of personal information](#)

You can request access to or correction of personal and health information held by the Department.

For information on making an FOI application, please visit our [Freedom of Information page](#) or contact the Freedom of Information Officer:

Freedom of Information Unit Department of Health and Human Services

Postal address: GPO BOX 4057, MELBOURNE, VIC 3001

Street address: 50 Lonsdale Street, MELBOURNE, VIC 3000

Phone: (03) 9096 8449 or 1300 650 172

Fax: (03) 9096 8848

Email the [Freedom of Information unit](#).

See the Department's general [Privacy policy](#) for further information on how the department manages privacy, or please contact the Privacy manager:

Department of Health

Postal Address: GPO BOX 4057, Melbourne VIC 3001

Street Address: 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

Ph: 1300 884 706

Email: [Privacy unit](#).

To receive this document in another format, phone [9096 7236](tel:90967236), using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email [Rural Generalist <ruralgeneralist@health.vic.gov.au>](mailto:ruralgeneralist@health.vic.gov.au).

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In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 'Indigenous' or 'Koori/Koorie' is retained when part of the title of a report, program or quotation.

Online PDF

Available at the [VRGP website](https://www.vicruralgeneralist.com.au/) < <https://www.vicruralgeneralist.com.au/> >