

AIYA MEDICAL CENTRE

**Electronic Communication Policy
for use of email, SMS and internet**

Preamble

Our practice electronic communication policy for use with email, SMS and internet will help protect the security of patient information and the reputation of Aiya Medical centre.

The practice team will be familiar with the following policy, comply with the policy, and understand the risks associated with using electronic forms of communication, both internally and external.

The Electronic Communication Officer

In our practice Krish is the Electronic Communications Officer. The Electronic Communications Officer is responsible for:

- Maintaining this policy.
- Providing an information session on this policy as part of a new employee's induction.
- Informing staff of updates and refresher training through staff meetings and notices.
- Responding to any concerns that staff or patients have with the policy.
- Implementing and recording quality improvements to the system.

Email and SMS – For staff

The use of email and short message services (SMS) are recognised as a useful tool for communication purposes. Practice staff are permitted to use the practice email accounts to send and receive business related material such as education updates, stakeholder communication, submitting Medicare provider number applications and communicating with locums or other staff where appropriate.

Practice staff will have access to a practice email account in the following levels:

- Generic: reception@aiyamedicalcentre.com.au
- Practice manager: reception@aiyamedicalcentre.com.au
- Receptionists: reception@aiyamedicalcentre.com.au
- Clinical practice team members: Medical practitioners, will have personalised use of a practice email account

The use of the practice email account is for business communications only.

The use of personal email accounts using practice internet and computer systems is discouraged, but may be used in personal/lunch/break times where this does not interfere with day to day operations. Large files such as video files and photographs should not be transmitted over the practice internet computer systems for personal communication.

Employees are reminded that the practice may become liable for the contents of any email message under certain circumstances. As such, a template email disclaimer will be inserted into the signature of all practice emails.

All members of the practice team are made aware of our policy regarding electronic communication with patients during induction, and are reminded of this policy on an ongoing basis. They are made aware that electronic communications could be forwarded, intercepted, printed and stored by others. Each member of the practice team holds full accountability for emails sent in their name, and they are expected to utilise this communication tool in an acceptable manner. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Limiting the exchange of personal emails
- Refraining from responding to unsolicited or unwanted emails
- Deleting hoaxes or chain emails

- Email attachments from unknown senders are not to be opened
- Virus checking all email attachments
- Maintaining appropriate language within electronic communications
- Ensuring any personal opinions are clearly indicated as such

Our practice reserves the right to check practices email accounts (reception@aiyamedicalcentre.com.au), as a precaution to fraud, viruses, workplace harassment or breaches of confidence by members of the practice team. Inappropriate use of the email facility will be fully investigated and may be grounds for dismissal.

Our practice uses the following email disclaimer notice on outgoing emails;

WARNING: The information contained in this email may be confidential. If you are not the intended recipient, any use or copying of any part of this information is unauthorised. If you received this email in error, we apologise for any inconvenience and request that you notify the sender immediately and delete all copies of this email, together with any attachments. Any views expressed in this message are those of the individual sender, except where the sender specifically states them to be the views of Aiya Medical Centre.

Protection against spam and theft of information

The practice utilises a spam filtering program AVG AntiVirus.

Staff will need to exercise caution in email communication and are advised to:

- Not open any email attachments or click on a link where the sender is not known.
- Not reply to spam mail.
- Not to share email passwords.
- Never try to unsubscribe from spam sites.
- Remain vigilant: do not provide confidential information to an email (especially by return email) no matter how credible the sender's email seems (for example, apparent emails from your bank).
- Be aware of phishing scams requesting logon or personal information (these may be via email or telephone).

Encrypted files are not automatically checked for viruses. All team members are to save, decrypt and then scan before opening the document.

Password maintenance

Each of our team members will have unique identification for all protected systems.

Staff will not share passwords. Access will be by individual password only and passwords will be periodically changed every 3 months and immediately if compromised.

- Passwords will not be generic.
- Passwords will be private and not shared.
- Passwords cannot be re-used.
- Passwords will be made up of 6 – 8 characters with alpha, numeric and special characters. The preference is use of a unique phrase.
- Our staff are strongly discouraged from using:
 - Dates of birth.

- Family or pet names.
- Dictionary words.

Password management

- Only the Electronic Communications Officer or practice manager can reset passwords.
- User identifications are archived or removed upon leaving the employment of the practice.
- Lock-out will occur after five unsuccessful login attempts to an account.

Email and SMS – For patients

Our practice does not communicate with patients via electronic means. Electronic communication includes email, facsimile and Short Message Service (SMS).

Our practice communicates via electronic means with practice team members, other health professionals, health authorities, pathology services suppliers etc.

Electronic communication of patients from external health care provider is transferred/given to relevant doctor in our practice for review.

Patients Pathology results are automatically downloaded into doctors' inbox via the clinical software, Best Practice.

Fax:

All patient related faxes are scanned directly into the patients' medical record for review by doctor. Any urgent patient related faxed are immediately handed to the Doctor. If the Doctor is not available the fax will be given to their delegate. Any faxes not patient related are handed to the relevant staff member.

Email and SMS – For stakeholders

Our practice email account for stakeholders for non-urgent communication with our practice is reception@aiyamedical.com.au

This email account will be routinely checked throughout the business day by Shathe/Manju/Loga;

- at the start of business
- midday
- one hour before end of business

The email message will then be forwarded to the appropriate team member for response.

Internet

The use of the internet as a legitimate business and research tool is both recognised and approved by Aiya Medical Centre. However, staff and management have a responsibility to ensure that there is no abuse of the resources for private purposes, that staff productivity is not compromised, that offensive material is not spread throughout the organisation and that the practice computer system is protected from the introduction of computer viruses.

All downloads from the internet must be scanned for viruses.

All sites accessed must comply with legal and ethical standards and the practice policies. The internet must never be used to download or access any illegal software or pornographic, defamatory, offensive, share-trading or gambling-related material.

Downloading of material via the internet slows access for other staff. The internet should not be used for downloading music, videos or radio programs, for making personal purchases or accessing interactive social websites, including Facebook, YouTube, Skype and Twitter, except in a professional capacity and approved by the Electronic Communications Officer.

Web browser security settings are not to be changed without authorisation of the practice manager.

Our practice computers are protected by firewalls as advised by our IT consultant.