

# CHARTER OF PATIENT RIGHTS



**Queensland**  
COUNTRY  
*dental*

*Welcome to*

## **QUEENSLAND COUNTRY DENTAL**

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**Queensland Country Dental will always endeavour to advise patients about their rights and the way our practice operates. Part of the process of providing this information to patients and/or carers is providing access to our Charter of Patient Rights. Please take the time to read through the following information. We will be pleased to answer any questions you might have.**



**Queensland Country Dental provides/offers a variety of reminders to assist patients to meet their appointments, including:**

- SMS reminders the day before
- E-mail reminders
- Postal reminders
- Phone reminders
- Combinations of any of the above methods tailored specifically to a patient's needs

## **APPOINTMENTS**

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**Queensland Country Dental aims to provide patients with appointments to meet their treatment needs. It is requested that patients make an agreed appointment time and date to assist in the scheduling process and notify the practice when an appointment cannot be met. To assist patients in attending and/or rescheduling their scheduled appointments we will contact them in the form of a reminder.**

The cancellation policy of Queensland Country Dental requires a minimum of 24 hours' notice for the cancellation of an appointment. Should the patient cancel without the required notice period, it is at the Dentist or Practice Manager's discretion as to whether a cancellation fee of \$25 is to be charged.

In the event that we are unable to accommodate a patient's request for an appointment at a specific time or date, consultation with the treating dental practitioner will be sought. In addition, emergency treatment will be provided for patients who are willing to wait if no appointments are available.

## SAFETY

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Queensland Country Dental aims to provide appropriate dental services in a safe, secure and supportive environment. We encourage patients and staff to raise any concerns they may have. If a concern is raised, all staff and management are required to address the concern as soon as possible. For further information about our commitment to safety refer to the Queensland Country Dental website [www.qldcountryhealth.com.au/dental](http://www.qldcountryhealth.com.au/dental).

All patients are required to complete a full medical and medication history as accurately and completely as possible, to allow staff to identify any circumstances that may increase the risks associated with dental care.

In the unlikely occurrence of an adverse event, dental practitioners at Queensland Country Dental have a responsibility to be open and honest in communications with the patient involved, and families or carers (if applicable).

It is the responsibility of the registered dental practitioner, in accordance with the Dental Board of Australia's Code of Conduct for Registered Health Practitioners, to explain to the patient what happened and why, as well as offering support and advice with regard to how the situation can best be resolved or managed.

## OPEN DISCLOSURE

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Upon recognising the occurrence of an adverse event, the dental practitioner will follow Queensland Country Dental's Open Disclosure Process, which aligns with the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare's Open Disclosure Framework, as outlined below:

- Act immediately to rectify the problem, if possible, including seeking any necessary help and advice
- Explain to the patient, in sufficient detail, so the patient understands what has occurred, including the anticipated short-term and long-term consequences
- Acknowledge any patient distress and provide appropriate support
- Develop a future management plan for the patient if required
- Ensure that the patient has access to information about the process for making a complaint

Sufficient detail is to be recorded in the patient's record to reflect the information provided to the patient about the incident, associated risks and likely consequences. The dental practitioner will notify the occurrence of the adverse event to their professional indemnity insurer, consistent with the clauses of their policy.



## **COMMUNICATION & DECISION MAKING**

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Queensland Country Dental respects the patient's right to receive adequate information to make informed decisions regarding their health and healthcare. Consequently, all staff will continually demonstrate a commitment to providing patients with accessible and understandable information about their treatment and treatment options, including costs, proposed medications and risks involved. This should also include maintaining suitable evidence that patients are fully informed about their proposed treatment and have been a partner in the development of their treatment plan. Such evidence will be monitored through Queensland Country Dental's review processes.

We do expect patients to actively participate in decisions and choices about their treatment and dental needs. For extensive treatment plans we also encourage a patient to involve their family or carer in the decision making process.

## **RESPECT**

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Queensland Country Dental values all patients as unique individuals. We will, at all times provide dental treatment in a manner that is respectful of cultures, beliefs, values and personal characteristics. Patients are asked to reciprocate this respect by being mindful of all staff at Queensland Country Dental and other patients.

# QUEENSLAND COUNTRY DENTAL'S INFORMED CONSENT PROCESS

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**The initial examination of a patient shall be considered 'implied consent' to that procedure based on the booking of an appointment, attendance, and the patient allowing the physical examination to occur. Any subsequent treatment shall require the patient to make an informed decision and expressly consent to the treatment either verbally or in writing, depending on the procedure and associated risks.**

**The dental practitioner who is to perform the treatment is responsible for the following informed consent process in line with the Dental Board of Australia's Code of Conduct for Registered Health Practitioners.**

## *A patient will be:*

- Told (or receive information in some other way) what procedure is being proposed
- Told (or receive information in some other way) about the possible risks and benefits of the treatment in a form or manner they can understand
- Informed of the risks and benefits of all options
- Afforded the opportunity to ask questions and receive answers that meet with their satisfaction
- Afforded sufficient time (if needed) to discuss the plan with their family, carer or advisor, especially for complex treatment plans
- Fully informed of and comprehending the cost of treatment
- Able to use the information provided to them to help them make a decision they believe is in their best interest, in the absence of any coercion from the dental practitioner; and
- Afforded the opportunity to communicate their decision to the dental practitioner either verbally or in writing before any subsequent treatment is provided.

Queensland Country Dental requires all dental practitioners to provide relevant documentation to the patient about the proposed treatment. The practice also requires dental practitioners to use their clinical judgement to determine where written consent is required from the patient and/or carer.

Dental practitioners shall take into account additional considerations regarding guardianship arrangements for consent matters when dealing with vulnerable patients.

Sufficient detail is to be recorded in patient records to reflect the information provided to the patient associated with their treatment options and the treatment plan, which is ultimately agreed upon.

## **INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENTATION**

All informed consent documentation used by the practitioners at Queensland Country Dental is reviewed at regular intervals and any updates to these documents are designed to improve patient understanding and the quality of care provided.



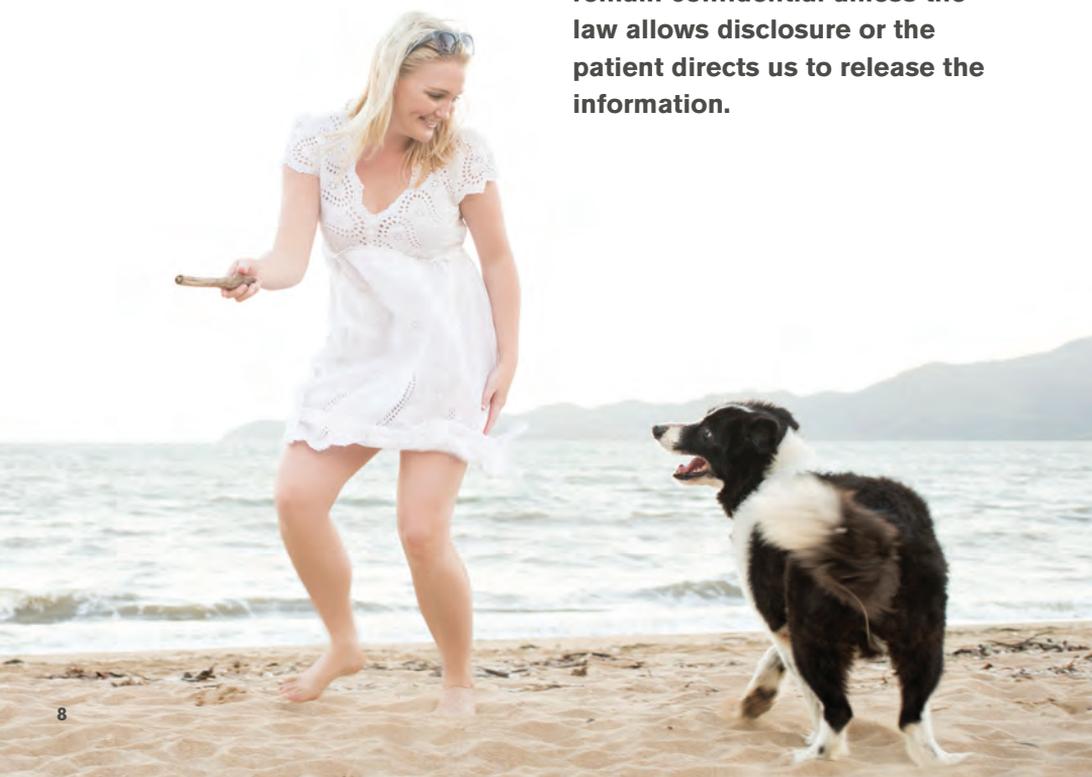
# PRIVACY NOTIFICATION

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Queensland Country Dental is required to protect and keep your personal information, including your health information, secure. To achieve this we are committed to complying with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs), and the Dental Board of Australia's Code of Conduct for Registered Health Practitioners when we collect, hold and manage your personal information, that is, information that allows others to identify you.

The APPs provide a set of rules which govern how we collect, use, disclose and store personal information. The APPs also require us to have a clearly expressed and up-to-date APP privacy policy about our management of personal information.

A patient can expect that their personal health and other information will be collected, used, disclosed and stored in accordance with relevant laws about privacy, and that this information will remain confidential unless the law allows disclosure or the patient directs us to release the information.



### *Collection, use and disclosure of personal information*

- All information collected from the patient will be used for the purpose of providing treatment. Personal information such as name, address and health insurance details will be used for the purpose of addressing accounts to the patient, as well as processing payments and writing to the patient about any issues affecting their treatment.
- We may disclose a patient's health information to other health care professionals, or require it from them if, in our judgement, it is necessary in the context of the patient's treatment. In this event, disclosure of personal details will be minimised wherever possible.
- We may also use parts of a patient's health information for research purposes, in study groups or at seminars as this may provide benefit to other patients. Should that happen, a patient's personal identity would not be disclosed without their consent to do so.

- Patient history, treatment records, x-rays and any other material relevant to treatment will be kept and remain in a secure environment.
- It is not likely that we will disclose a patient's personal information to overseas recipients.

### *How we collect personal information*

- In providing dental treatment we will collect personal information directly from patients.
- We will hold a patient's personal information in either electronic or paper files.
- From time to time, we will ask patients to confirm their contact information.
- Patients have a right to access dental information held about them by this practice. Patients may inspect or request copies of their treatment records at any time, or seek an explanation from the dentist.

## PRIVACY NOTIFICATION CONT.

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### *How can patients access their personal information?*

**The following procedure has been developed to ensure that all requests for access are dealt with as efficiently as possible:**

- All requests for access (other than straightforward requests for copies of test or treatment results made to your dentist during your consultation) should be made in writing using a Request for Release of Dental Records Form.
- Requests for access will be acknowledged within 7 working days of the receipt of the request.
- Where it is not possible for access to be granted within 30 days, the patient will be notified/advised when and if access will be granted.
- Where access is refused, the patient will be advised in writing of the reasons for refusal. This will include any information about other means by which access may be facilitated.
- A patient will not be permitted to remove any of the contents of their dental file from the practice, nor will they be permitted to alter or erase information contained in the dental record. However, if any of the information we have about a patient is inaccurate, a patient is encouraged to ask us to alter their records accordingly, in writing.
- When a request for copies of dental records is received, a fee for postage (depending on the amount/weight of records etc) may be required to be paid by the patient.
- Generally, patients will be required to collect their records in person. However, in some limited circumstances patients may give written authorisation for records to be provided to another person.
- If a patient, or authorised person, is collecting a copy of dental records, they may be required to provide identification. Where possible this should be photographic identification.

## OUR APP PRIVACY POLICY

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**Our APP Privacy Policy is available at [www.qldcountryhealth.com.au](http://www.qldcountryhealth.com.au).  
The Policy contains information about:**

- How a patient can access their personal information.
- How a patient can seek correction of their personal information.
- How a patient may complain about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles.
- How Queensland Country Dental deals with privacy complaints.



# PATIENT FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

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**A patient's evaluation of the care received at our practice is an extremely important form of feedback that provides valuable information about the services we provide. We encourage patients to provide both positive and negative feedback in writing or verbally.**

All staff will be provided with training and support that will assist them to identify, report and respond appropriately to complaints and other negative feedback. At Queensland Country Dental we classify negative feedback into three categories:

## *1. Enquiries:*

Low level matters where an explanation or clarification of circumstances satisfies or resolves the patient's concerns. No further risk or future action against the dental practitioner or practice is indicated.

## *2. Notification:*

A complication or incident that has not caused the patient to make any complaint or claim, but has the potential to become a complaint or claim in the future. The dental practitioner involved will consult their professional association in these matters for guidance on handling the incident and whether notification to the professional indemnity insurer is required. The dental practitioner's management of such complications or incident will be compatible with the practice's Open Disclosure Process.

### *3. Complaint or Claim:*

Matters in which a patient, or person on behalf of the patient, has made a verbal or written complaint to the practitioner or to a statutory or legal body, regarding some element of treatment that has been provided by the dental practitioner to the patient. The dental practitioner involved will consult their professional association and their professional indemnity insurer prior to responding to the matter.

A patient will be required to make a request for a refund of fees or a complaint about a serious matter in writing providing sufficient details to enable the matter to be given full consideration.





# QUEENSLAND COUNTRY DENTAL'S COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCESS

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**Queensland Country Dental will acknowledge and respond in a timely manner, either verbally or in writing, in respect to the seriousness of the complaint. We aim to respond to all complaints within 10 working days. All complaints will be recorded in the complaints register.**

All complaints will be reported and reviewed by the Principal Dentist of the practice. Queensland Country Dental expects responsibility for the management of practitioner related complaints will lie with the dental practitioner about whom the complaint is related. The dental practitioner involved will respond to the complaint upon receipt of advice from their professional association and/or their insurer.

## *Complaints Review Process:*

Queensland Country Dental is committed to continuous improvement in safety and quality. The Principal Dentist will analyse data/feedback and take action where required. Any review actions/outcomes will be communicated to staff. In addition, incidents and analysis of incidents are reviewed by the General Manager of Risk.

## *Notifying patients about their rights:*

Queensland Country Dental will always endeavour to advise patients about their rights and the way our practice operates. Part of the process of providing this information to patients and/or carers is providing access to our Charter of Patient Rights, including:

- Signage within the practice
- Charter of Patient Rights distributed with new patient welcome documentation
- Available on the Queensland Country Dental web page - [www.qldcountryhealth.com.au/dental](http://www.qldcountryhealth.com.au/dental)

Queensland Country Dental expects all staff will assist patients to understand their patient rights and the way our practice operates. It is the responsibility of staff to pro-actively identify those patients who may be at risk of not understanding their healthcare rights in accordance with Queensland Country Dental's 'At Risk Patients and Escalation of Care Policy', and to consult the dental practitioner if further guidance is needed.

## HOW TO CONTACT US

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| In person | Queensland Country Centre,<br>333 Ross River Road,<br>Aitkenvale QLD 4814           |
| Post      | Principal Dentist,<br>Queensland Country Dental,<br>PO Box 679, Aitkenvale QLD 4814 |
| Phone     | 1800 4 QCDENTAL   |
| Website   | <a href="http://qldcountryhealth.com.au/dental">qldcountryhealth.com.au/dental</a>  |
| Email     | <a href="mailto:dental@qccu.com.au">dental@qccu.com.au</a>                          |

