

How long will it take?

BRHS will respond promptly to requests and has a maximum of 45 days from receipt of your application to inform you of the outcome of your request. At this time, you may also receive an invoice for any applicable charges. These charges must be paid for *in full*.

Your Privacy

Rest assured, BRHS is required by law to protect your privacy. We will keep your personal information secure and disclose information about you only when required by law.

If my request is denied, can I appeal?

Applicants have the right to consult with the Health Information Manager or appeal to the FOI Commissioner where documents requested under FOI :

- ❖ Cannot be found or are said not to exist
- ❖ Are not provided within the required times, or
- ❖ If you are unhappy with the way in which your request was handled, in the first instance submit your complaint to the Health Information Manager or Director of Medical Services.

Where can I get an Application Form or More Information?

Forms are available from HIS
Phone : (03) 5150 3387
Fax : (03) 5150 3340
Email : medicalrecords@brhs.com.au
Forms may also be downloaded from the BRHS website

Improving the health and wellbeing of the East Gippsland community by providing accessible, high quality and sustainable health care.

We welcome feedback at:

Bairnsdale Regional Health Service
PO Box 474 Bairnsdale VIC 3875
P 03) 5150 3333 F 03) 5152 6784
E email@brhs.com.au
www.brhs.com.au

The information in this brochure is intended as a guide to one of the services provided by BRHS and is correct at the time of publishing.

Issue date: June 2019 by Health Information Services **Our Ref:** GI0011

Bairnsdale Regional Health Service is located on the traditional land of the Gunai Kurnai people.

My team *is* **BRHS**



**Freedom of Information
Patient Information**

What is Freedom of Information?

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 1982 gives you the right to request access to documents held by Bairnsdale Regional Health Service (BRHS). FOI also allows you to amend incorrect information in your record and to request an explanation or a summary of the information. In certain instances we have the right to refuse your request, but if this happens we will tell you why.

What information does BRHS have about me?

Your patient record includes health information collected during your inpatient and outpatient attendances. It is used to help health professionals, from or working with BRHS, provide you with appropriate treatment and care by giving them information about the care and a history of any previous care. The information collected includes that of emergency, general medicine, maternity, rehabilitation, aged care, palliative care, mental health and drug and alcohol services (if care is provided as an inpatient or outpatient).

How is my information kept?

BRHS holds records in a variety of formats and systems, including electronic and paper records. They are kept for as long as the timeframes required under the General Retention and Disposal Authority for Records, Public Records Act PROS11/06.

Common Timelines for Record Retention

Type of Record	Retention Period
Acute Medical Record	15 years if patient reached age 30
Deceased Acute Medical Record	12 years
Accident & Emergency Records	12 years
Birth Registers	Permanent
Historical Obstetric Acute Medical Records (Oct 1952-1973)	Permanent

What can I access?

You can refer to the Guideline FOI Statement of Publications available on the internet to find out about what types of records are held by BRHS. Access may be in the form of requesting access to copies of patient records or inspecting the patient record (in the presence of the Director of Medical Services or delegate).

How do I access information?

Applications must be made in writing to the Health Information Manager on an Application Form submitted to the Health Information Services (HIS) Department. Your request to either view the record or obtain a copy must be clear. Records will only be provided to a person other than the patient if written authority from the patient is given, or if you can provide evidence you have been named as Power

of Attorney, have been appointed Legal Guardian, or are the direct Next of Kin (in the case of a deceased person).

Records may also be made available in accordance with due legal process, e.g. as evidence in a legal action before a court.

Costs & Requirements for Application

Under the FOI Act, the person making an application must pay certain costs, all subject to change. These costs are :

- *Application fee* (non-refundable) = \$29.60
- *Supervision charges* = \$5.00 per quarter hour or part thereof
- *Photocopy charges* – 20c per page
- *If you are the holder of a current health care/pension card please ensure a copy of your entitlement card is provided.*

Applications must be sent with proof of your identity (e.g. a copy of your driver's license or passport).