

If my request is denied, can I appeal?

Applicants have the right to consult with 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 your request was handled, in the first instance you can submit your complaint to complaintsandcompliments@brhs.com.au or by phoning our Quality team on 5150 3421

For an application form or more information

Phone : (03) 5150 3387

Fax : (03) 5150 3340

Email : medical.records@brhs.com.au

<https://brhs.com.au/freedom-of-information-requests/>

BRHS

Bairnsdale Regional
Health Service

We welcome feedback at: **Bairnsdale Regional Health**

Service PO Box 474, Bairnsdale VIC 3875

P (03) 5150 3241

E complaintsandcompliments@brhs.com.au

www.brhs.com.au

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

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.

BRHS

*Your Health,
Our Priority*

Freedom of Information For patients and their families

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 1982

gives you the right to request access to documents held by 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.

If you have any questions, please ask.

**Information and an application form can be found at
<https://brhs.com.au/freedom-of-information-requests/>**

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 timeframe required under the General Retention and Disposal Authority for Records, Public Records Act PROS11/06.

Common timelines for record retention

- **Acute Medical Record** -15 years (if patient reached age 30)
- **Deceased Acute Medical Record** -12 years
- **Accident and Emergency Records** -12 years
- **Birth Registers** - Permanent
- **Historical Obstetric Acute Medical Records (Oct 1952-1973)** - Permanent

What can I access?

Refer to <https://brhs.com.au/freedom-of-information-requests/> to find out about what types of records we hold. Access may be in the form of requesting access to copies of patient records or inspecting the patient record (in the presence of a BRHS staff member. Medical records are stored on paper and electronically as part of the Gippsland Health Alliance (GHA), which is made up of a number of health services across the region.

By default, information from these services will not be included in your release. If you require further information from any other GHA partners please contact them directly.

How do I access information?

Applications must be made in writing to the Freedom of Information Officer on an Application Form submitted to the Freedom of Information Officer or 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 and 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)** = \$32.70
- **Supervision charges** = \$5 per quarter hour or part thereof
- **Photocopy charges** = 20c per page

Note: FOI applications may take up to 30 days to process.

If you are the holder of a current health care or 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.)

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.