

# REQUESTS FOR CLIENT INFORMATION

## 1.1 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

### 1.2 GENERAL INFORMATION

The Freedom of Information Act 1982 (hereinafter "FOI") entitles an individual (hereinafter "applicant") to have access to his/her own personal records which are held by Government agencies.

Requests must be made in writing to the agency that holds these records, and a response will be made as soon as possible and within the limits given by FOI. Fees have not been set, and if any fee is to be charged, it will not be in excess of that given in FOI. Evidence of identity will be required. Facilities for reading or photocopying are normally available at NRCHC.

After the records have been reviewed, individuals can make a written request to agencies to amend their records if these are incomplete, incorrect, out-of-date, or misleading. See [2.4 Correction of Personal Information](#) of Part V for further details.

Agencies are entitled to withhold information if they consider that it might prejudice the physical or mental health or well-being of that person. Individuals can request a review of that decision to the CEO.

If desired, an applicant may contact the FOI Officer by telephone for assistance in preparing a letter of request or obtaining other guidance.

### 1.3 FOI ACCESS PROCEDURE

Requests for access to information in documentary form in the custody of NRCHC should be made in writing and addressed to:

The Chief Executive Officer

North Richmond Community Health Centre

23 Lennox Street

North Richmond, VIC 3121

Letters of request should include the following basic information:

- Family name
- First name
- Date of birth
- Postal address
- Telephone numbers: work and home
- Details of the information sought
- Approximate dates or the period(s) during which the documents were generated

- Manner in which access is sought, eg, inspection of the documents, a copy of the documents which will be taken away, or access in some other form

## **1.4 ACCESS TO PERSONAL FILES**

The applicant should be as specific as possible, eg, specifying the approximate dates or period when the documents were generated and supplying the applicant's address during that period, when requesting the documents. Additionally, in the case of a medical record/history file, the registration number allotted to the applicant as a patient of NRCHC should be indicated, if known. This will allow NRCHC staff to more easily locate them in storage and may reduce the waiting time for the applicant as well as lessen the charges payable.

If NRCHC does not hold a copy of the applicant's signature, a statutory declaration as to the identity of the applicant may be sought before a decision on the request is given.

Access will normally be granted only to the individual named on the file. Where, due to illness or disability or any other reason an individual cannot attend in person, a statutory declaration naming the person to have access will be required.

For all requests, evidence of identity will be required at the time of giving access to the documents sought. A licence to drive a motor vehicle, a pension card, or similar identification bearing a specimen signature will normally be acceptable.

Where access to documents is granted for the purpose of inspecting them on NRCHC premises, arrangements will be made for this to be done under the supervision of an officer of NRCHC. In the case of viewing a personal medical record, a medical practitioner will be available, where possible, to assist with interpretations.

Each request will be acknowledged promptly in writing, quoting the reference number allotted to the request.

No later than 45 days of this acknowledgment, the applicant will be informed as to whether or not the documents sought are available, and if so, where access to all or part of the documents is granted. If deletions of some of the documents or part of the documents are proposed, the sub-sections of the FOI Act under which those deletions are claimed will be quoted. Charges payable by the applicant, before access to the documents is given, will be included in this letter.

### **1.4.1 CORRECTION OF PERSONAL FILES**

If a person wishes to correct or amend personal information in a document held by NRCHC, he/she should lodge a written request with the CEO.

The claimant should specify which sections of the record or information held by NRCHC are incomplete, are incorrect, are out

of date, or give a misleading impression. The claimant may specify the amendment which he/she wishes made as well as provide the correct information to amend the wrong information.

The claimant should include the address to where NRCHC's response should be mailed.

The claimant will be notified in writing within 30 days of receiving the written request of the decision on the amendment. Where a request to correct or amend is refused, the claimant will be informed as prescribed by the FOI Act, including the claimant's right to have the decision reviewed.

## **1.5 NOMINATED OFFICER**

The CEO of NRCHC is the responsible officer for FOI legislation purposes.

### **1.5.1 CLIENT REQUESTS**

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Prepared in readiness for Health Records Act