



## Access to patient information

10 July 2020

The Union has provided a number of members with advice, support and representation regarding allegations of inappropriate access to patient records in recent months. In all of these cases the allegations have been taken incredibly seriously by investigating officers and the potential consequences for members have been significant.

Members should remember the following as advised by QAS in regard to their access to patient information:

- only collecting or accessing personal information relevant to the task being undertaken;
- ensuring we store personal information securely;
- protecting against unauthorised access of the IT systems we use to store personal information; and
- using and disclosing personal information only for legitimate and lawful purposes.

### **Ensure collection and use of information is relevant to the task**

It's important that members understand that their access to sensitive information like patient records is only used for genuine work reasons. As QAS employees, and as registered health professionals, it's not acceptable or appropriate to access, use or disclose personal or health information when not directly related to your duties. It's also not acceptable or appropriate for employees to use their access to information systems to look up personal or health information for themselves, friends, family members, work colleagues or out of curiosity.

### **Penalties**

Failure to meet these important obligations may result in serious consequences. In some

circumstances this can include coming to the attention of AHPRA, potentially affecting professional registration, employment disciplinary processes up to and including termination of employment and even criminal penalties including imprisonment for the most serious offences.

**If in doubt, contact us**

As advised by QAS in numerous staff communications, United Workers Union would reiterate, the accountability that sits with access to this information should not be understated. If you're at all unclear about your obligations as outlined above, contact your Station Delegate, State Councillor or local organiser.

If you have a co-worker who would like to receive these important updates share this link to join United Workers Union:

[www.unitedworkers.org.au/joinform](http://www.unitedworkers.org.au/joinform)

In Unity,

***United Workers Union***