

Pelvic procedure: Request for Access to Health Records

SA Health is supporting women who have been or are affected by pelvic mesh

SA Health is assisting women in South Australia who are experiencing complications from pelvic mesh. This includes helping women request access to their medical records and, where the information is held by public hospitals in South Australia, waiving the Freedom of Information (FOI) fees and charges.

Access to medical records

Subject to some limited restrictions, the *South Australian Freedom of Information Act 1991* (FOI Act) gives you a legally enforceable right to be given access to any documents held by government.

Applications for access to medical records held by public hospitals or health services must be made in writing in accordance with Section 13 of the FOI Act and may be lodged through the support of the Pelvic Mesh Consumer Support Line.

Pelvic Mesh Consumer Support Line – 1800 66 MESH (1800 666 374)

SA Health is supporting women in South Australia who are experiencing complications from pelvic mesh and is waiving of the FOI application fee and any associated charges to assist you in accessing a copy of your public hospital Medical Record.

The Pelvic Mesh Consumer Support Line can assist you with lodgement questions, such as the type of documents you need for your request or where to lodge your request.

Requesting copies of documents

If you wish to access your personal medical records it is most likely that this information is held at a public hospital or health service.

Applications for access to documents must be made in writing and lodged with the agency that holds the document.

When making an FOI application you will need to provide enough information to enable the correct documents to be identified. You will be required to provide a copy of your personal identification that includes your current address (i.e. Health Care Card, driver's licence).

The *Pelvic Procedure Freedom of Information Application Form* can be downloaded from www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/pelvicmesh, or you can download an FOI form by visiting the website of the site where the surgery was performed.

If you are seeking access to documents on behalf of another person, you will need to provide that person's written consent.

Processing Requests for access to documents

After receiving your application, the hospital is required to deal with it in accordance with the requirements of the FOI Act and provide you with a written decision. This is called a 'Notice of Determination'. The Notice of Determination will include the hospital's decision in relation to your request.

In accordance with Premier and Cabinet Circular PC045, where documents are provided as a result of an FOI application for access to non-personal information, details of the application, and the documents to which access is given, may be published in the agency's disclosure log. A copy of PC045 can be found on the Department for Premier and Cabinet website.

How long will it take?

A request for access will be dealt with as soon as possible and no later than 30 calendar days. In certain circumstances the hospital may need to extend the timeframe for dealing with your request. If this is the case, it will advise you within 20 calendar days if an extension is necessary, and why.

For more information

Pelvic Mesh Consumer Support Line
C/- Continence Nursing Services, Family Clinics
Women's & Children's Division
Lyell McEwin Hospital
Telephone: 1800 66 MESH (1800 666 374)
Email: Health.PelvicMeshSupportService@sa.gov.au
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/pelvicmesh



www.ausgoal.gov.au/creative-commons



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