



How to Develop a Patient Consent Form

This guide¹ was developed in compliance with the principles of medical professionalism set by the Australian Medical Association (AMA) and the Medical Indemnity Industry Association of Australia (MIIAA) in the *Clinical images and the use of personal mobile devices - A guide for medical students and doctors*.

The guide outlines the key ethical and legal issues to be aware of before collecting patient consent for the purpose of providing clinical care.

Information for doctors and medical students

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Privacy Principles*

The Australian Privacy Principles (Privacy Act 1988) regulates the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information, including clinical images.

What should you be aware of?

- Before taking a clinical image, consider the purpose for which you require the image, and obtain appropriate consent in written or verbal format.
- Make sure the patient understands the reasons for taking the image, how it will be used, and to whom it will be shown. In case you are sharing those images with other health professionals or using them for studies/research, this must be made clear to the patient.
- Document the consent process and check what your health service/hospital requirements are for written consent. You also have the ability to add your patient consent form to DermEngine and ask the patient to sign it directly on your smart device.
- It is important to understand that clinical images may contain information that can be used to identify the patient. As such, you are not allowed to send clinical images to anyone else unless you have the patient's consent to do so, or if the patient would reasonably expect you to send the image for the purpose of their clinical management (for example, another doctor), or if you are otherwise permitted by law to do so.

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Consent to collect a clinical image

Patient information is personal and private, and it is part of your clinical duty to keep patient data secure. Healthcare providers have an ethical, professional, and legal duty to respect patient rights to privacy and confidentiality regarding their personal and health information, and how it should be used.

Healthcare providers must collect consent to take clinical images from patients, as well as to collect personal information. Patients have the right to consent to or refuse the collection, use, and disclosure of clinical images.

DermEngine allows healthcare professionals to include customized consent documentation under their accounts and collect digital signatures from patients. These signatures are then stored on DermEngine and linked to that patient's profile. Documenting the consent process on DermEngine allows for an easier, quicker and more secure process, as there is no paper to be stored which would require additional space and security processes.

Some of the items that must be contained within your consent document include:

- The purpose(s) of the clinical image i.e. why the clinical image is being taken.
- How the clinical image may be used e.g. an image could be used in a de-identified form for training and education purposes.
- Who will have access to the image.
- Whether it may be shared and disclosed to others, and for what purposes.
- Whether it will be de-identified.
- How and where it will be stored.

Patients also have the following rights:

- Right to refuse consent
- Right to withdraw consent
- Right to review/change consent items

Patients and doctors can exercise these rights, at any time, on DermEngine by using the [Subject Request Form](#).