
The Protection of Personal Information (POPIA) Notice

The Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 ("POPIA") requires us to inform our patients how we collect, use, disclose, store and destroy the personal information we obtain. We are committed to protecting our patients' privacy and will ensure that your personal information is used appropriately, transparently, securely and in accordance with applicable legislation.

By visiting, interacting with and/or receiving medical treatment from **Dr Z Aleksic Inc t/a The Eye Surgery** and the ophthalmologists consulting at its rooms (hereafter referred to as "the practitioner"), the patient consents to the following:

A. CONSENT

1. My personal information may be collected, processed, recorded and used, and must be safeguarded, during the rendering of medical services to me by the practitioner.
2. The practitioner may add to my personal information with information received from other medical service providers and third parties, in order to offer a more comprehensive and appropriate service to me.
3. The practitioner may verify, share and disclose my personal information to the product providers, software providers and third parties whose services or products the practitioner uses in order to adequately and appropriately render medical services to me, including the hospital and anaesthesiologist for booking surgeries and the categories of service providers and recipients set out in **section C** below. These providers act as operators on the practitioner's behalf and are bound by written agreements to keep my information confidential and secure.
4. The practitioner may also collect and process my personal information for the practitioner's own marketing purposes, to ensure that its products and services remain applicable and appropriate.

B. FURTHERMORE, I UNDERSTAND THAT:

1. I have the right to access the personal information which the practitioner holds about me, and that it can take up to 30 days to process my request.
2. Any information I supply to the practitioner is supplied voluntarily.
3. I have the right to ask the practitioner to update, correct or delete my personal information on reasonable grounds. Such a request must be made in writing, by me.
4. My personal information, as well as my diagnosis, will be disclosed to my medical aid scheme and the main member of the account and/or, if applicable, my broker, should I have requested that the practitioner obtain authorisation, submit claims or process any other request to my medical aid scheme on my behalf.
5. **Medical aid schemes:** should I not agree to the disclosure of my diagnosis on my account (quote / statement / invoice), the medical aid scheme has the discretion to reject my claim. *(You will be required to provide written notice upon each visit should you not wish for your diagnosis / ICD-10 codes to appear on your account.)*
6. Where applicable, my personal information as well as my diagnosis will be disclosed to the person or entity responsible for payment of my account, e.g. my partner or employer. *(You will be required to provide written notice upon each visit should you not wish for your diagnosis / ICD-10 codes to appear on your account.)*

7. Once I object to the practitioner processing my personal information, the practitioner may no longer process it, unless this is within reasonable parameters such as concluding a transaction or outstanding business, or where the law requires or permits it.
8. Should I wish to withdraw my consent to the processing of my personal information, I must do so in writing, addressed to the practitioner's Information Officer.
9. Once I withdraw my consent, the practitioner is still obliged under legislation and HPCSA guidelines to keep my medical records for at least 6 years after they become dormant (longer for minors and in certain other cases), and/or may retain my medical records for its own protection for as long as the practitioner remains in practice.
10. The practitioner may disclose my information where it has a duty or a right to do so in terms of applicable legislation, or where it may be necessary under any other law.
11. Should my account not be settled within 30 days after services were rendered to me, the practitioner will provide relevant personal information to its attorneys and/or debt collectors for purposes of debt collection.
12. Consultations may be listened to and transcribed by the practice's approved AI clinical scribe to prepare clinical notes, as set out in **section C**. Audio of my consultation is not stored, and I may ask that the AI scribe not be used.
13. Where I did not give written consent for the practitioner to obtain my information, the practitioner cannot be held responsible for obtaining such information.
14. The waiting areas of the practitioner's consulting rooms are CCTV recorded.
15. If I refuse to provide my personal information where the practitioner's purpose for collecting it is based on a contractual requirement, legal obligation and/or legitimate interest of the practitioner, this would hinder the practitioner's ability to perform its duties and responsibilities. Where reasonable justification exists, the practitioner may as a consequence reserve its right to refuse admission, diagnosis and treatment.

C. SOFTWARE, AI AND WHO WE SHARE INFORMATION WITH

The practice uses carefully selected software and service providers to run the practice and to spend more of each consultation focused on you. For security reasons we describe them by category below rather than by name. Each is used only for the purpose described:

Category	What it is used for	How your information is protected
Practice management and electronic health record system	Appointments, registration, medical aid details, billing and claims, clinical notes, reports, letters, consent forms, and SMS, e-mail and telephone communication with you.	Holds your official patient record. Each staff member has an individual, password-protected login.
Diagnostic and imaging software	Storing and viewing the results and images of your eye tests (e.g. scans, photographs and visual fields).	Accessible only to the clinical team, through individual logins.
AI clinical scribe	With your knowledge, listens to the consultation and prepares a draft clinical note, letter, medical certificate or plain-language take-home summary.	Audio is not stored, and your information is not used to train AI or sold. The doctor reviews and approves every note before it is saved to your record. Data is stored on secure servers in the European Union.



Category	What it is used for	How your information is protected
AI writing assistant	Helping staff draft general e-mails, letters, templates and practice documents.	No patient names, contact details, ID numbers, medical aid details or health information are entered. Patient details are added afterwards in the practice system.
Translation tools	Interpretation when you and the doctor do not share a language.	Used only with your agreement. Identifying details are not typed into translation tools.
E-mail, cloud storage, backup, office software, internal staff messaging and practice devices	Correspondence, document storage, secure backups, communication between staff and day-to-day administration.	Practice-managed accounts and devices only, protected by passwords and device security.
Website, online forms and messaging	Contact and online patient intake forms, and messages with the practice's WhatsApp number (through a WhatsApp business messaging platform).	Submissions are captured in your practice record. Please do not send sensitive medical information by message unless we ask for it.

Who else may receive your information, only as needed for your care or account:

- hospitals and day clinics where you are treated (e.g. bookings and theatre lists), your anaesthetist and other doctors involved in your care;
- suppliers of lenses, implants, contact lenses and medication, who receive only your name and the order details needed to supply the correct item for you;
- your medical aid (claims, authorisations and, at your request, copies of invoices and statements for reimbursement);
- clinical outcome registries, **only with your specific consent**; and
- the practice's accountants and bookkeeping service, for practice financial records.

In addition:

- **A doctor always decides.** AI tools help with paperwork only. They do not make decisions about your diagnosis or treatment, and every AI-generated note is checked by the treating doctor.
- **You can say no.** You may ask at any time that the AI scribe not be used during your consultation. This will not affect your care in any way.
- **Approved tools only.** Staff may only use the practice's approved tools, through practice accounts. Using personal accounts or unapproved AI tools for patient information is prohibited.
- **Signed confidentiality undertakings.** All employees have signed employment contracts and addenda covering patient confidentiality, privacy (POPIA) and the acceptable use of AI, and practitioners are bound by the HPCSA Ethical Rules. Service providers that process information on our behalf are bound by written agreements or binding terms.
- **Information outside South Africa.** Some providers (e.g. the AI clinical scribe, e-mail, cloud storage and messaging services, including internal staff messaging) store information on servers outside South Africa. We only use providers that are subject to data-protection laws or binding agreements offering protection substantially similar to POPIA.

D. QUERIES AND COMPLAINTS

For any queries, or to exercise your rights, please contact our Information Officer: **Dr Zoran Aleksic** at info@eyesurgery.co.za or **021 426 4842**. Our PAIA Manual is available at the practice and on www.eyesurgery.co.za.

If you are not satisfied with how we have handled your personal information, you may lodge a complaint with the **Information Regulator**: POPIAComplaints@inforegulator.org.za | 010 023 5200 | www.inforegulator.org.za.