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Pain Matrix Terms of Service

Introduction and Purpose:

Welcome to Pain Matrix, a specialised clinic committed to providing comprehensive pain management solutions. This document serves as the Terms of Service agreement, establishing the principles and expectations governing the relationship between Pain Matrix and our patients. With a compassionate team of experts, we strive to address your unique pain challenges and improve your quality of life. At Pain Matrix, we value open communication, informed consent, and a discrimination-free environment. Together, we embark on a journey towards a life with reduced pain and enhanced well-being.

Scope of Services:

- Pain Evaluation and Diagnosis:
 - At Pain Matrix, we employ a thorough and multidimensional approach to pain evaluation and diagnosis. Our pain specialists will conduct detailed assessments, taking into consideration the patient's medical history, lifestyle, and pain symptoms. The evaluation process may include, but is not limited to, the following components:
 - Comprehensive Pain Assessment: Our team will conduct in-depth interviews with the patient to understand the nature, location, intensity, and duration of their pain.
 - Physical Examination: A comprehensive physical examination will be performed to assess musculoskeletal function, neurological responses, and other relevant factors.
 - Diagnostic Imaging and Tests: When necessary, advanced diagnostic imaging, such as X-rays, MRI scans, or nerve conduction studies, may be ordered to aid in accurate diagnosis.
 - Psychological Assessment: We recognise the connection between pain and emotional well-being. Psychological assessments may be conducted to address any potential psychological factors contributing to the pain.
- Pain Management Interventions: Pain Matrix offers a wide range of evidence-based pain management interventions to effectively address acute and chronic pain conditions. Our pain specialists are highly skilled in performing various interventional procedures and treatments, including but not limited to:
 - Pharmacological Therapies: Our specialists will prescribe appropriate medications, including analgesics, anti-inflammatory drugs, and adjuvant medications, tailored to each patient's specific needs.
 - We understand that managing your health and ensuring timely access to medications are vital aspects of your wellbeing. As a valued patient of Pain Matrix, we are committed to providing you with the best possible care and support. In order to maintain continuity in your treatment, we would like to remind you about an important responsibility - following up with your General Practitioner (GP) for ongoing prescriptions.

- Pain Matrix and Prescription Management:
 - At Pain Matrix, our primary focus is to diagnose and develop personalized treatment plans to help alleviate your pain and improve your quality of life. During your consultation, our Pain Specialists assess your condition, review your medical history, and may prescribe appropriate medications to address your pain management needs.
 - While we play a crucial role in your treatment journey, it is important to understand that Pain Matrix is not responsible for issuing ongoing prescriptions. Our primary role involves diagnosing and managing pain through various treatment modalities, which may include medication prescriptions as part of a treatment plan.

- Ongoing Prescription Needs:
 - Your GP is a trusted healthcare professional who possesses a comprehensive understanding of your medical history and overall health. They are best positioned to manage your ongoing healthcare needs, including prescription refills and adjustments. Your GP can monitor your progress, assess the effectiveness of your treatment plan, and address any concerns or complications that may arise. While Pain Matrix is not responsible for ongoing prescriptions, we remain dedicated to providing you with comprehensive pain management care. Remember, your health is in your hands. By working collaboratively with your GP and Pain Matrix, we can achieve optimal pain management outcomes together. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to our team. We are here to support you throughout your pain management journey.

- Taking Charge of Your Health:
 - To ensure seamless access to your required medications, it is essential that you take an active role in your healthcare journey. Here are some steps you should follow:
 - Establish a relationship with a reliable GP: If you haven't already, make sure to select a GP who is convenient for you to access and with whom you feel comfortable discussing your health concerns.
 - Attend regular check-ups: Schedule and attend regular check-ups with your GP as advised. These appointments allow your GP to monitor your progress and evaluate your pain management plan.
 - Communicate effectively your ongoing prescription needs to your GP during your appointment, and discuss any changes in your pain levels, side effects, or concerns.
 - Timely prescription refills: Keep track of your medication supply and request prescription refills well in advance. Do not wait until you run out of medication to contact your GP.
 - By actively engaging with your GP and taking charge of your healthcare, you can ensure that you receive uninterrupted access to the medications you need to manage your pain effectively.

 - **Interventional Procedures:** We provide a variety of minimally invasive procedures, such as nerve blocks, joint injections, epidural steroid injections, radiofrequency ablation, and neuromodulation techniques.
 - **Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation:** Pain Matrix offers physical therapy programs to improve musculoskeletal function, increase flexibility, and promote overall well-being.

- **Alternative and Complementary Therapies:** Our clinic may incorporate non-traditional approaches like acupuncture, mindfulness-based therapies, and biofeedback to complement conventional pain management strategies.

Individualised Treatment Plans:

- At Pain Matrix, we recognize that each patient's pain experience is unique, necessitating personalized treatment plans. Based on the comprehensive evaluation, our pain specialists will design individualized treatment plans that align with the patient's specific needs, preferences, and goals. These treatment plans will be continuously assessed and modified to ensure the most effective pain management approach.

Patient Education:

- Education plays a crucial role in empowering patients to take an active role in managing their pain. Pain Matrix places great emphasis on patient education, and our team will provide clear and understandable information about the patient's condition, available treatment options, and self-care strategies. Patients will be equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to make informed decisions regarding their pain management.

Patient Eligibility:

- At Pain Matrix, we strive to provide comprehensive care and specialised treatment for individuals with chronic pain conditions. We welcome all patients who meet the following eligibility criteria to seek the expertise of our pain specialists:
 - **Valid Referral:** All patients with a valid referral from their General Practitioner (GP) or any other specialist doctor are eligible to schedule an appointment with our pain specialists. The referral should outline the relevant medical history and reasons for seeking pain management services.
 - **Work Cover Patients:** Patients who have suffered injuries while at work and are covered by Work Cover insurance are eligible to receive pain management services at Pain Matrix. We work closely with Work Cover to facilitate direct billing when the patient provides an updated approval letter from the insurance provider.
 - **TAC Patients:** Individuals who have experienced injuries due to transport accidents and are covered by the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) insurance can also benefit from our pain management expertise. Similar to Work Cover patients, we will directly bill TAC if the patient presents an updated approval letter from the insurance provider.

Appointment Scheduling and Cancellation:

- **Appointment Scheduling:**
 - **Scheduling Initial Appointments:** Patients can schedule their initial appointments at Pain Matrix upon receiving a referral. This means that a patient who has been referred to the pain specialist at Pain Matrix can call or visit the clinic to set up their first appointment.

- **Scheduling Review Appointments:** After the patient has seen a pain specialist for an initial appointment, they are eligible to schedule review appointments. These review appointments can be scheduled at any time deemed necessary by the patient or as recommended by the pain specialist.
 - **Appointment Reminders:** Pain Matrix utilises SMS reminders to help patients remember their scheduled appointments. Two days prior to the appointment, an SMS reminder will be sent to the patient to ensure they are aware of the upcoming visit.
 - **Reminder Calls:** In cases where the clinic does not have a recorded mobile number for a patient, the reception team will take the initiative to call the patient and remind them of their scheduled appointment.
- **Cancellation Policy:**
 - Pain Matrix has a cancellation policy in place to ensure that appointment slots are efficiently utilised and to minimise disruptions in the schedule. If a patient needs to cancel their appointment, they are required to do so within a 24 hours to avoid incurring a cancellation fee.
- **Fees for Missed Appointments:**
 - **Cancellation Fee:** If a patient cancels their appointment within the allowable time frame, they might not face any additional charges. However, if they fail to cancel within the specified time frame or do not show up for their appointment, they may be charged a cancellation fee of \$50. This fee compensates the clinic for the missed appointment slot and covers administrative costs.
 - **No-Show Fee:** Apart from the cancellation fee, Pain Matrix may also have a no-show fee of \$50. This fee is applicable if a patient misses an appointment without any prior notice or cancellation.

Privacy and Security:

- **Information We Collect:**
 - **Personal Information:** Name, contact details (address, email, phone number), date of birth, and other identifying information.
 - **Medical Records:** Information related to medical history, symptoms, treatments, medications, and test results.
 - **Communications:** Any information shared when patients communicate with us through our website, emails, or other means.
 - **Cookies and Usage Data:** We may collect data on how you use our website through cookies and similar technologies.
- **Use of Patient Information:**
 - **Treatment:** Using medical records and information to diagnose and treat patients appropriately.
 - **Communication:** Sharing appointment reminders, healthcare updates, and responding to patient inquiries.
 - **Third-Party Service Providers:** We may share patient information with third-party service providers to facilitate communication and data collection. We will always endeavour to protect patient data and ensure third-parties are compliant with data storage and regulations in relation to the relevant legislation.
- **Data Protection and Security:**
 - **Confidentiality:** We prioritise patient confidentiality and ensure access to patient information is restricted to authorised personnel for legitimate medical purposes.
 - **Data Security:** We employ industry-standard security measures to safeguard patient data from unauthorised access, alteration, disclosure, or destruction.

- Data Sharing with Third Parties:
 - Limited Sharing: We may share patient information with third parties for specific purposes, such as communication or data collection. However, we will never sell patient data to any third party.
 - Compliance: We will only share patient information with third parties in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- Data Retention:
 - We will retain patient information as long as necessary for providing medical services, complying with legal obligations, and fulfilling legitimate business purposes.
- Data Breach:
 - In the event of a data breach compromising patient information, we will take appropriate measures to mitigate its impact and inform affected individuals as required by law.
- Your Rights:
 - Access and Correction: Patients have the right to access their information and request corrections if necessary.
 - Withdraw Consent: Patients may withdraw their consent for certain data processing activities.
- Limitations:
 - While we do our best to secure patient data, it is essential to understand that no method of data transmission or storage can guarantee absolute security. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the complete protection of patient data.
- Changes to the Privacy Policy:
 - We reserve the right to update this Privacy Policy from time to time. Any changes will be posted on our website, and your continued use of our services after such changes will constitute your acceptance of the revised policy.
 - If you have any questions or concerns regarding our privacy practices or wish to exercise your rights, please contact us.

Informed Consent:

- Our doctors will obtain written informed consent from all patients before any procedures or treatments are applied.

Fees and Payment:

This practice is a privately billed practice and as such I understand there will be out of pocket fees associated with consultations which need to be paid on the day. Scripts, theatre procedures and anaesthetics, I agree to pay all accounts by the due date, as specified by the generated invoice; unless a compensable third party has already agreed in writing to pay all outstanding debts. If an account is overdue, I understand that Pain Matrix has the right to refuse me healthcare treatment until debts are settled in full.

Referral and Consultation:

- After a consultation with a patient, doctors may decide to write a letter to the elected General Practitioner (GP) and other relevant parties to provide advice and updates on the patient's health status and the recommended course of action. This letter serves as a formal and documented communication, ensuring that all concerned parties are informed about the patient's condition and the steps to be taken for their care. Here's a breakdown of the process:

- Patient Consultation: The patient visits a specialist or a hospital for a medical consultation. During this appointment, the doctor examines the patient, reviews their medical history, performs any necessary tests or evaluations, and discusses the patient's concerns and symptoms.
- Assessment and Diagnosis: Based on the consultation and test results, the doctor makes a diagnosis and formulates a treatment plan or provides advice to manage the patient's condition effectively.
- Letter Composition: After the consultation, the doctor prepares a detailed letter summarising the key points of the visit. The content of the letter typically includes:
 - Patient's personal details (name, age, contact information).
 - Date and details of the consultation.
 - Relevant medical history.
 - Presenting symptoms and complaints.
 - Examination findings and test results.
 - Diagnosis or working diagnosis (if further tests are needed).
 - Treatment plan, including prescribed medications or therapies.
 - Recommended lifestyle changes or self-care instructions.
 - Follow-up instructions, if applicable.
 - Any other relevant information for the patient's care.
- Recipient of the Letter: The primary recipient of this letter is the elected General Practitioner (GP) responsible for the patient's primary care. The letter helps keep the GP informed of the specialist's assessment and recommendations, enabling them to coordinate the patient's overall healthcare more effectively.
- Other Interested Parties: Depending on the circumstances, the letter may also be sent to other healthcare professionals involved in the patient's care, such as other specialists, nurses, or allied healthcare providers. It ensures that everyone involved in the patient's treatment has access to important updates and can make informed decisions accordingly.
- Privacy and Consent: Before sending the letter to other parties, the doctor ensures that they have the patient's explicit consent to share their medical information with relevant healthcare providers. Patient privacy and confidentiality are of utmost importance, and any sharing of medical information is done in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The consent may be obtained verbally.
- Follow-Up and Continuity of Care: The letter helps maintain continuity of care for the patient. By sharing information among the medical team, everyone is on the same page regarding the patient's health, progress, and any changes in the treatment plan.

Medical Records:

- Right to Access: Patients have a legal right to access their medical records held by healthcare providers. This right extends to both public and private healthcare facilities, including hospitals, clinics, and individual practitioners.
- Process of Access: Patients can request access to their medical records in writing. The request should be addressed to the healthcare provider or the facility that holds the records. It is essential to provide sufficient information to identify the records in question, such as the date of treatment and the name of the healthcare provider.
- Timeframe: According to the Health Records Act 2001, healthcare providers must respond to the request for access within 45 days of receiving the written request. This response can take the form of providing access to the records or explaining any reasons for refusal.
- Exceptions: While patients generally have a right to access their medical records, some exceptions may apply. Healthcare providers may refuse access in certain circumstances, such as when access could pose a risk to the patient's health or safety, or if it may infringe on the privacy of another person. However, the provider must provide a valid reason for refusal in such cases.
- Fees: Providers are allowed to charge a reasonable fee for providing access to medical records. The fee is typically meant to cover the cost of copying, handling, and sending the records to the patient.

- Correcting Inaccurate Information: If patients find inaccuracies or incomplete information in their medical records, they have the right to request corrections. Healthcare providers should respond to such requests within a reasonable timeframe and make necessary amendments if the information is found to be incorrect.

Termination of Services:

- Reasons for Termination: Termination of the doctor-patient relationship at Pain Matrix may occur for various reasons, including but not limited to:
 - Patient non-compliance with treatment plans or failure to attend scheduled appointments without valid reasons.
 - Unreasonable or abusive behaviour towards our staff or healthcare providers.
 - Breach of professional boundaries or any form of inappropriate behaviour by the patient.
 - Identification of a conflict of interest that may compromise the quality of care provided.
 - Incompatibility between the patient and the healthcare provider.
 - Doctor's relocation or retirement.
- Ethical Considerations:
 - The termination process at Pain Matrix shall adhere to the principles of medical ethics, including respect for patient autonomy, non-discrimination, and patient confidentiality.
- Communication:
 - Before initiating the termination process, the healthcare provider shall make reasonable efforts to address any issues leading to potential termination.
 - When termination is deemed necessary, the healthcare provider shall communicate the decision to the patient in a clear and compassionate manner. Whenever possible, the communication should be in writing.
 - Patients shall be provided with a clear explanation for the termination, emphasising the reason for the decision while avoiding personal attacks or derogatory language.
- Notice Period:
 - Patients shall be given a reasonable notice period before the termination becomes effective. The duration of the notice period shall depend on the patient's medical condition and urgency of the situation. However, under exceptional circumstances where immediate termination is necessary for patient safety or other compelling reasons, the notice period may be waived.
- Continuity of Care:
 - During the notice period, the healthcare provider shall continue to provide necessary medical care to the patient to ensure continuity of care.
 - Patients shall be assisted in transferring their medical records to a new healthcare provider or in finding a suitable replacement for ongoing treatment.
- Non-Discrimination:
 - Termination of the doctor-patient relationship shall not be based on discriminatory factors, such as race, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic.
- Compliance and Review:
 - This policy shall comply with all relevant laws, regulations, and guidelines set forth by the Medical Board of Australia, the Australian Medical Association, and other applicable medical authorities. It shall be subject to periodic review to ensure its effectiveness and alignment with current best practices.

