



# FertilityNorth

Fertility & Endometriosis Treatment Centre

## GynaeNorth

6/11/2024

### Cyber incident notification for patient records

This website statement relates to you if you were a patient at Fertility North or Gynae North prior to March 2024 and haven't received a direct notification from us previously, or if you were a patient over 10 years ago.

In **March 2024**, Fertility North identified a cyber incident that impacted technology platforms used in our business operations. This incident involved unauthorised access by an unknown third-party to our IT environment, which may have involved your personal information.

Between **March and May 2024**, Fertility North directly notified individuals involved, if they were patients of Fertility North within the last 10 years. We considered this was the most appropriate approach, recognising the risk of data misuse is reduced for patients who visited us over 10 years ago. We were also mindful of the risk of secondary privacy breaches associated with issuing letter notifications to historical patients who may have since changed their address.

Following discussions with the Office of the Australian Information Commission (**OAIC**), we have revisited our assessment and are posting this website statement to reach patients who were not directly notified of the incident previously, or who were patients over 10 years ago.

We are providing this website statement to alert patients of the incident, the potential involvement of their personal information, and provide guidance to remain vigilant for any potential activity.

If you have already been directly notified of this incident, you do not need to consider the below information.

#### What happened?

Unauthorised activity was detected across technology platforms at Fertility North including the patient management system, Artemis.

Upon discovery, we immediately isolated our systems and engaged external leading cyber security experts to investigate what occurred.

We can confirm that all affected systems were isolated, all unauthorised access was revoked, and the root cause was rectified.

#### What has Fertility North done?

Since we became aware of the cyber incident on **4 March 2024**, the unauthorised access has been contained and Fertility North worked as a priority with an independent IT forensic expert to confirm our systems are secure.

Unfortunately, the forensic expert is unable to confirm with certainty what information was accessed or taken from our systems. We have taken the decision to notify patients as a matter of precaution and to give patients awareness so that you can take any suggested steps to protect your information.

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**Dr Vince Chapple | Dr Jay Natalwala | Dr Gian Urbani | Dr Megan Byrnes | Dr Maria Kladnitski  
Dr Bart Smith | Dr Mike Kamara | Dr Rashida Hakeem**

Suite 30, Level 2, Joondalup Private Hospital, 60 Shenton Avenue, Joondalup WA 6027

**Phone:** (08) 9301 1075 **Fax:** (08) 9300 1000 **Email:** admin@fertilitynorth.com.au

**ACN:** 103 211 169 **ABN:** 55 908 702 752

[www.fertilitynorth.com.au](http://www.fertilitynorth.com.au)



We have also reported the incident to the OAIC and are working with the OAIC to ensure that any recommendations provided by them to best support our patients are addressed.

### **Personal Information involved**

Our patient management system, Artemis contains our patient data.

The types of information contained in the system will vary from patient to patient and depends on what you previously provided to Fertility North over your engagement with us prior to March 2024.

In addition to the records generated as part of your care, this could include scanned documents such as referral letters and sensitive health information. There is a risk that these documents may have been accessed or taken. However, please be assured that we are not aware of misuse of any potentially compromised personal information to date, based on monitoring activities we have undertaken.

The data within a referral letter may include a patient's name, address, date of birth, an individual healthcare identifier (IHI), Medicare number and a description of the clinical reason(s) for referral to Fertility North and attached pathology reports. An IHI is an individual unique 16-digit number the My Health Record system uses to identify an individual.

Some Assisted Reproductive Treatment patients may have provided photo identification that would still be valid at the time of the event. However, any ID documents provided to us by patients over 10 years ago will have expired and since been replaced, and there is no risk of misuse of that data.

Please consider if you have previously provided us with any of this information when reviewing the below advice on steps that you can take.

### **What steps can you take to protect your information?**

***If you were a patient within the last 10 years and have not heard from us:*** Fertility North has already reached out to those individuals directly if you were a patient within the last 10 years. However, if you have not received such a notification and were a patient within the last 10 years, please go to <https://www.fertilitynorth.com.au/cyber-security/> for more information.

***If you were a patient over 10 years ago:*** Whilst we cannot specifically confirm that your personal information may have been accessed, we recognise that it is natural to consider whether you need to take additional steps to protect your personal information.

You can visit <https://www.fertilitynorth.com.au/cyber-security/> to help you quickly navigate to information to help you access independent recommendations about steps that you may want to take in response to this incident, depending on what information you provided to Fertility North as part of your patient care.

In terms of your personal information, you can find information and support for Victims of Cybercrime at <https://www.cyber.gov.au/report-and-recover/have-you-been-hacked> and <https://www.idcare.org>.

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## GynaeNorth

### **Further information**

We are here to support you. Should you have any questions please contact our dedicated team on [support@fertilitynorth.com.au](mailto:support@fertilitynorth.com.au) who will be able to help.

We sincerely apologise for any impact this incident may cause and want to reassure you that we will continue to consider ways to bolster our cyber security to mitigate recurrence.

We will keep this website statement online for 6 months from the date of publication.

Kind regards

Dr Vince Chapple  
Medical Director

and

Dr Jay Natalwala  
Clinical Director



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