**Privacy Policy**

Allergy First Privacy Policy

1. Introduction

Our practice is committed to best practice in relation to the management of information we collect. This practice has developed a policy to protect patient privacy in compliance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (‘the Privacy Act’).  Our policy is to inform you of:

* the kinds of information that we collect and hold, which, as a medical practice, is likely to be ‘health information’ for the purposes of the Privacy Act;
* how we collect and hold personal information;
* the purposes for which we collect, hold, use and disclose personal information;
* how you may access your personal information and seek the correction of that information;
* how you may complain about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles and how we will deal with such a complaint;
* whether we are likely to disclose personal information to overseas recipients

2. What kinds of personal information do we collect?

The type of information we may collect and hold includes:

* Your name, address, date of birth, email, Medicare number and contact details
* DVA number and other government identifiers, although we will not use these for the purposes of identifying you in our practice
* Other health information about you, including:
  + notes of your symptoms or diagnosis and the treatment given to you
  + your specialist reports and test results
  + your appointment and billing details
  + your prescriptions and other pharmaceutical purchases
  + your dental records
  + your genetic information
  + your healthcare identifier
  + any other information about your race, sexuality or religion, when collected by a health service provider.

3. How do we collect and hold personal information?

We will generally collect personal information:

* from you directly when you provide your details to us. This might be via a face to face discussion, telephone conversation, registration form or online form
* from a person responsible for you
* from third parties where the Privacy Act or other law allows it - this may include, but is not limited to:  other members of your treating team, diagnostic centres, specialists, hospitals, the My Health Record system, electronic prescription services, Medicare, your health insurer, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

4. Why do we collect, hold, use and disclose personal information?

In general, we collect, hold, use and disclose your personal information for the following purposes:

* to provide health services to you
* to promote proactive public health messages to you
* to communicate with you in relation to the health service being provided to you, and to advise of new services
* to comply with our legal obligations, including, but not limited to, mandatory notification of communicable diseases or mandatory reporting under applicable child protection legislation.
* to help us manage our accounts and administrative services, including billing, arrangements with health funds, pursuing unpaid accounts, management of our ITC systems
* for consultations with other doctors and allied health professional involved in your healthcare;
* to obtain, analyse and discuss test results from diagnostic and pathology laboratories
* for identification and insurance claiming
* If you have a My Health Record, to upload your personal information to, and download your personal information from, the My Health Record system.
* Information can also be disclosed through an electronic transfer of prescriptions service.
* To liaise with your health fund, government and regulatory bodies such as Medicare, the Department of Veteran's Affairs and the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) (if you make a privacy complaint to the OAIC), as necessary.
* We may send your direct marketing material communications and information about our products and services that we consider may be of interest to you.

5. How can you access and correct your personal information?

You have a right to seek access to, and correction of the personal information which we hold about you.

For details on how to access and correct your health record, please contact our practice as noted below under ‘Contact Details’:

We will normally respond to your request within 30 days.

6. How do we hold your personal information?

Our staff are trained and required to respect and protect your privacy. We take reasonable steps to protect information held from misuse and loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. This includes:

* Holding your information on an encrypted database
* Our staff sign confidentiality agreements
* Our computers are only accessible via individual password access to those in the practice team who have appropriate levels of authorisation.
* Our computers have screen savers or other automated privacy protection devices are enabled to prevent unauthorised access to computers.
* Our servers are backed up and checked at frequent intervals, consistent with a documented business continuity plan.
* Our back up information is stored in a secure off site environment.
* Our computers are protected by antivirus software that is installed and updated regularly
* Our computers connected to the internet are protected by appropriate hardware/software firewalls.
* We have a business continuity plan that has been developed, tested and documented.

7. Privacy related questions and complaints

If you have any questions about privacy-related issues or wish to complain about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles or the handling of your personal information by us, you may lodge your complaint in writing to (see below for details).  We will normally respond to your request within 30 days.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you may refer the matter to the OAIC:

Phone: 1300 363 992

Fax: +61 2 9284 9666

Post: GPO Box 5218   
Sydney NSW 2001

Website: <https://www.oaic.gov.au/individuals/how-do-i-make-a-privacy-complaint>

8. Overseas disclosure.

We may disclose your personal information to the following overseas recipients:

* any practice or individual who assists us in providing services (such as where you have come from overseas and had your health record transferred from overseas or have treatment continuing from an overseas provider)
* anyone else to whom you authorise us to disclose it

9. Updates to this Policy

This Policy will be reviewed from time to time to take account of new laws and technology, changes to our operations and other necessary developments. Updates will be publicised on the practice's website.

10. Privacy and websites

Our Practice utilises a range of electronic tools to better engage with our patients and local community. We maintain an up-to-date internet presence to provide you with health information and interaction with our practice via:

* Our website
* Search Engines
* Internet Based Map Services
* Service Directories
* Linked social media platforms

These websites and forums have the ability for you to post comments. Any information posted by you in a public forum on these platforms is available for public viewing, and we recommend you do not put any sensitive information or details relating to your health or treatment on these platforms. In order to optimise the delivery of relevant health information and to analyse the uptake of campaigns, we may use cookies and other analytics available through social media and search engine providers. We do not use this information to identify you personally.

We also provide convenience and timely access to healthcare via

* Our web-based patient booking portal
* Our patient booking App

These services are administered by a third-party provider in a secure manner. They provide us with your information for the purposes of booking appointments and creating your medical record. This information is then stored and used in accordance with the prior provisions of our privacy policy. You can access details of their privacy policy here: <https://healthengine.com.au/privacy.php>

12. Contact details for privacy related issues

C/O - Practice Manager

Ph:  07 3180 3846

Email: info@allergyfirst.com.au