



# Privacy Policy

## **The Bridge Family Practice & Skin Clinic**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this Privacy Policy is to provide information to you, our patient, on how your personal information and health information is collected and used within our practice, and the circumstances in which we may share it with a third party.

As an Australian-based Organisation, any data and information collected is held, used and disclosed in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*.

### **Patient Health Record Definition**

A patient health record is a collection of a patient's demographic and medical data, forming a confidential personal file.

### **Patient Consent**

When you register as a patient of our practice, you provide consent for our GPs and practice staff to access and use your personal information to facilitate the delivery of healthcare. Your consent will be obtained from you by completing our "*Patient Registration Form*" either in person at our practice, or via the online form available on our website or the HotDoc online bookings platform.

Additional consent (secondary purpose) may be required for specific consultations such as treatment room procedures, consultations with real-time audio/visual recordings including telehealth consults. This consent will include the duplication, storage and destruction of any such audio/visual recordings.

Only practice staff who need to see your personal information will have access to it. If we need to use your information for anything else, we will seek additional consent from you to do this.

### **Collection of Information**

Our practice will need to collect your personal information to provide healthcare services to you.

Our main purpose for collecting, using, holding, sharing and updating your personal information is to manage your health. We also use it for directly related business activities, such as financial claims and payments, practice audits and accreditation, and business processes (*e.g., staff training*).

The information we will collect about you includes your:

- Full name, date of birth, postal and residential addresses, contact details.
- Healthcare identifiers (for identification and claiming purposes)
- Medical information including medical history, medications, allergies, adverse events, immunisations, social history, family history and risk factors.

Our practice may collect your personal information in several different ways.

1. When you make your first appointment, our practice staff will collect your personal and demographic information by means of your registration.
2. During the course of providing medical services, we may collect further personal information via electronic transfers of prescriptions, My Health Record information such as Shared Health Summaries and / or Event Summaries.
3. We may also collect your personal information when you visit our website, send us an email or SMS, telephone us, make an online appointment or communicate with us using social media.
4. In some circumstances personal information may also be collected from other sources. Often this is because it is not practical or reasonable to collect it from you directly.

*This may include information from:*

- your guardian or responsible person



- other involved healthcare providers, such as specialists, allied health professionals, hospitals, community health services and pathology and diagnostic imaging service
- your health fund, Medicare, or the Department of Veterans' Affairs (as required).

## **Use and Disclosure of Information**

We sometimes share your personal information:

- with third parties who work with our practice for business purposes, such as accreditation agencies or information technology providers — these third parties are required to comply with Australian Privacy Principles and this Policy.
- with other healthcare providers involved in your care
- when it is required or authorised by law (*e.g., court subpoenas*)
- when it is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to a patient's life, health or safety or public health or safety, or it is impractical to obtain the patient's consent
- to assist in locating a missing person
- to establish, exercise or defend an equitable claim
- for the purpose of confidential dispute resolution process
- when there is a statutory requirement to share certain personal information (*e.g., certain diseases*)
- during the course of providing medical services or using My Health Record (*e.g., uploading shared health summary, event summary*).

Only people who need to access your information will be able to do so. Other than in the course of providing medical services or as otherwise described in this policy, our practice will not disclose any personal or health information with any third party without your consent.

We will not share your personal information with anyone outside Australia (unless under exceptional circumstances that are permitted by law) without your consent.

Our practice will not use your personal information for marketing any of our goods or services directly to you without your expressed consent. If you do consent, you may opt out of direct marketing at any time by notifying our practice in writing.

## **Use of Document Automation Technology**

Document Automation is where systems use existing data to generate electronic documents relating to medical conditions and healthcare.

Our practice uses document automation technologies to create documents such as referrals, which are sent to other healthcare providers. These documents contain only your relevant medical information.

These document automation technologies are used through secure medical software. Our practice uses “Best Practice Software.” All users of this software have their own unique user credentials and password and can only access information that is relevant to their role in the practice team.

## **Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Scribes**

Our practice uses an AI scribe tool to support GPs take notes during their consultations with you.

The AI scribe uses an audio recording of your consultation to generate a clinical note for your health record.

This practice uses “Lyrebird Scribe” which is fully integrated with “Best Practice Software.” Only your General Practitioner can access this content.

Lyrebird Scribe:

- does not share information outside of Australia
- destroys the audio file once the transcription is complete
- removes sensitive, personal identifying information as part of the transcription

You have the right to refuse the use of the AI Scribe tool during your consultation.



## **Security and Storage of Information**

Your personal information may be stored at our practice in various forms, primarily as electronic records but also as paper records for limited periods. Our practice complies with the RACGP's "Information Security in General Practice" guidelines.

Our practice stores all personal information securely. All electronic records are secured in protected information systems and can only be accessed by authorised and designated personnel with unique passwords.

Paper records are stored in a secure area accessible by staff only and lockable cabinets are used for highly confidential information. Paper records which are no longer required, are placed in a locked confidential shredding bin and destroyed by a contracted destruction services company.

## **Access**

You have the right to request access to, and correction of, your personal information.

Our practice acknowledges patients may request access to their medical records. We require you to put this request in writing. You may obtain a "Request for Personal Health Information Form" from reception and our practice will respond within a reasonable time.

Our practice will take reasonable steps to correct your personal information where the information is not accurate or up to date. From time to time, we will ask you to verify that your personal information held by our practice is correct and current.

You may also request that we correct or update your information by completing an "Update of Details Form" obtainable from reception or sending an email request to [info@thebridgefamilypractice.com.au](mailto:info@thebridgefamilypractice.com.au)

You have the right to deal with us anonymously or under a pseudonym unless it is impracticable for us to do so or unless we are required or authorised by law to only deal with identified individuals.

## **Privacy Concerns**

We take complaints and concerns regarding privacy seriously. You should express any privacy concerns you may have in writing.

You can obtain a complaint/feedback form from reception or email [info@thebridgefamilypractice.com.au](mailto:info@thebridgefamilypractice.com.au)  
We will then attempt to resolve it in accordance with our resolution procedure.

Further information on Privacy Legislation is available from:

**Office of the Australian Information Commissioner**

[www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au) or Tel: 1300 363 992

and

**Health and Disability Services Complaints Office**

[www.hadsco.wa.gov.au](http://www.hadsco.wa.gov.au) or Tel: 1800 813 583

## **Privacy and our Website**

Our website records visits for analytical purposes and no personally identifiable information are retained by [www.thebridgefamilypractice.com.au](http://www.thebridgefamilypractice.com.au) Our online booking provider HotDoc retains information for the purposes of providing healthcare appointments and adheres to the Australian Privacy Principles.

Our Privacy Policy is available to patients at all times. A copy of this policy is kept at the practice reception and is readily available should a patient request to read it. It is also conveniently located on our website.

## **Policy Review Statement**

This policy is reviewed annually and updated as required.