



## Privacy Policy – A Patient Guide

*(For distribution to individuals on request)*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

**Illawarra Radiology Group** respects your right to privacy and recognises that maintaining patient confidentiality is an integral part of providing a medical service.

The Federal Privacy Act has set out 10 National Privacy Principles, which apply to health service providers from 21 December 2001.

This Policy describes how we manage any personal and health information we have about you, in compliance with our obligations to you under the Privacy Act.

### 2. WHAT PERSONAL INFORMATION ABOUT AN INDIVIDUAL DOES ILLAWARRA RADIOLOGY GROUP HOLD?

**Illawarra Radiology Group** collects information from patients and sometimes others associated with your healthcare, in order to attend to your health needs and for associated administrative purposes.

**Illawarra Radiology Group** may hold the following information about you:

- name, address, telephone number(s)
- date of birth
- health information
- General Practitioner
- Referring Doctor
- Pensioner or Health Care Card information
- Workers Compensation and motor vehicle accident details
- transaction details associated with services we have provided to you
- any additional information provided to us by you
- any information you provided to us through patient/referrer surveys or feedback to our patient services officer.

We will be fair in the way we collect information about you.

Illawarra Radiology Group will destroy or de-identify personal information after our legal obligations to retain the information have expired.

### 3. WHAT DOES ILLAWARRA RADIOLOGY GROUP DO WITH MY PERSONAL INFORMATION?

Patient information is used and disclosed for purposes directly related to your healthcare, and in ways that are consistent with your expectations for quality and continuity of healthcare.

**Illawarra Radiology Group** uses your information:

- to provide medical treatment and care;
- to provide information to Medical Practitioners, Registered Nurses and other Allied Health Professionals who provide treatment, necessary follow up treatment and ongoing health care to you;
- to assist with any calls you make to us;
- for our internal administrative requirements
- to process private health fund claims;

- for internal reporting procedures in a de-identified form;
- to provide data in both an identified and de-identified form to State and Federal Government agencies in compliance with numerous legislative requirements (e.g. BreastScreen, Cancer Council, National Health and Medical Research Council);
- for quality assurance or clinical audit activities where we seek to evaluate and improve the delivery of a particular aspect of our service;
- for complaint handling and defence of anticipated or existing legal activities;
- for planning and evaluation of accreditation activities;
- for provision to an individual of further information about advances in radiology and treatment options;
- if lawfully instructed to reveal information.

The National Privacy Principles prohibit the use of the personal information that we collect and hold about you for certain purposes unless you provide consent

We will seek your consent if we wish to use your information:

- for marketing, and to communicate special events;
- for research & teaching.

You may at any time opt out of your consent to receiving any communications from us (other than as required for the operation of our business, e.g. payment of your account). Notification in writing of this option would be appreciated.

**Disclosure of Information:**

Further to the above, Illawarra Radiology Group will not disclose personal information, except on a confidential basis to agents that we use in the ordinary operation of our business, such as for data processing, printing, mailing, debt collection, professional accreditation and quality assurance.

Should any patient wish their information, for example, films and reports, to be collected by a friend or relative on their behalf, they will be required to complete a *Third Party Authority to Collect* form which is available from Reception. Illawarra Radiology Group will only release records for collection by a specifically designated third party if this form is completed.

Patients may also advise our Reception staff of persons whom you wish NOT to be provided access to your information, irrespective of any request received.

**4. STORAGE & DATA SECURITY**

The storage of personal information will be undertaken in a secure manner that protects patients' privacy.

**Illawarra Radiology Group** stores personal information:

- a. contained in paper-based and other hard copy documents located securely within the practice. All practices have security alarms, which are in operation outside business hours.
- b. contained in electronic databases in a secure environment; and
- c. archived to a dedicated storage facility.

Such records are only accessible by those persons who require access to that information for the purpose of carrying out their employment.

**5. ACCESS & CORRECTION**

You may request access to personal information we hold about you by writing to the Illawarra Radiology Group Privacy Officer at the address below.

You do not have to provide a reason for requesting **access**. Where we hold information that you are entitled to access, we will endeavour to provide you with the information within a reasonable period. In most cases, personal collection of the information is the preferred option. On collection, we will ask for a form of identification, e.g. driver's licence, credit card. A fee for collation, copying and delivery of information may be charged.

If **Illawarra Radiology Group** deems it necessary to deny your application for personal information then we will give you our reasons for denial in writing.

If you believe that personal information we hold about you is incorrect, incomplete or inaccurate, then you may request it to be amended. We will then consider if the information requires amendment. If we do not agree that there are grounds for amendment, then we will add a note to the personal information stating that you disagree with it.

## **6. MISCELLANEOUS**

Any questions about this policy, or any complaint regarding treatment of your privacy by Illawarra Radiology Group, should also be made in writing to the address below.

Illawarra Radiology Group Privacy Officer,  
383 Crown Street,  
Wollongong NSW 2500

Tel: (02) 4254 6912  
Fax: (02) 4227 6595

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*In this policy, "personal information" and "health information" have the same meaning as under the Privacy Act.*

*This document represents Illawarra Radiology Group Policy as at 30 June 2008. We may change this policy from time to time. Although we intend to observe this policy at all times, it is not legally binding on Illawarra Radiology Group in any way.*

**Dated: 30 June 2008**