

Notice of Privacy Practices

This notice describes how health information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. Please review it carefully. The privacy of your health information is important to us.

OUR LEGAL DUTY

We are required by applicable federal and state law to maintain the privacy of your health information. We are also required to give you this Notice about our privacy practices, our legal duties and your rights concerning your health information. We must follow the privacy practices that are described in this Notice while it is in effect. This Notice takes effect January 1, 2016 and will remain in effect until we replace it.

We reserve the right to change our privacy practices and the terms of this Notice at any time, provided such changes are permitted by applicable law. We reserve the right to make changes in our privacy practices and the new terms of our Notice effective for all health information that we maintain, including health information we created or received before we made the changes. Before we make a significant change in our privacy practices, we will change this Notice and make the new Notice available upon request.

You may request a copy of our Notice at any time. For more information about our privacy practices, or for additional copies of this Notice, please contact us using the information listed at the end of this Notice.

USES AND DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION

We use and disclose health information about you for treatment, payment and healthcare operations. For example:

TREATMENT: We may use and disclose your health information to a physician or other healthcare provider providing treatment to you; including coordination, consultation or referral of a patient for health care from one provider to another.

PAYMENT: We may use and disclose your health information to obtain payment for services we provide to you; including organizing and submitting claims to insurance companies, medical necessity determinations and reviews, utilization review and collection of outstanding accounts.

HEALTHCARE OPERATIONS: We may use and disclose your health information in connection with our healthcare operations. Healthcare operations include quality assessment and improvement activities, reviewing the competence or qualifications of healthcare providers, evaluating practitioner performance, conducting training programs, accreditation, certification, licensing or credentialing activities.

YOUR AUTHORIZATION: In addition to our use of your health information for treatment, payment and healthcare operations, you may give us written authorization to use your health information or to disclose it to anyone for any purpose. If you give us an authorization, you may revoke it in writing at any time. Your revocation will not affect any use or disclosures permitted by your authorization while it is in effect. Unless you give us a written authorization, we cannot use or disclose your health information for any reason except those described in this Notice.

PERSONS INVOLVED IN YOUR CASE: We may use or disclose health information to notify, or assist in the notification of (including identifying or locating) a family member, your personal representative or another person responsible for your care, of your location, your general condition or death. If you are present, then prior to use or disclosure of your health information, we will provide you with an opportunity to object to such uses or disclosures. In the event of your incapacity or emergency circumstances, we will disclose health information based on a determination using our professional judgment disclosing only health information that is directly relevant to the person's involvement in your healthcare. We will also use our professional judgment and our experience with common practice to make reasonable inferences of your best interest in allowing a person to pick up your items of health information.

USES AND DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION CONTINUED

MARKETING: In most instances, we cannot use or disclose your health information for marketing purposes or sell your health information without your written authorization.

REQUIRED BY LAW: We may use or disclose your health information when we are required to do so by federal, state or local law.

RESEARCH: We may use and disclose health information about you for research projects that are subject to a special approval process. We will ask you for your permission if the researcher will have access to your name, address or other information that reveals who you are, or will be involved in your care at the office.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION: We may release health information about you for workers' compensation or similar programs. These programs provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness.

PUBLIC HEALTH RISKS: We may disclose health information about you for public health reasons in order to prevent or control disease, injury or disability; or report births, deaths, non-accidental physical injuries, reactions to medications or problems with products.

HEALTH OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES: We may disclose health information to a health oversight agency for audits, investigations, inspections or licensing purposes. These disclosures may be necessary for certain state and federal agencies to monitor the health care system, government programs and compliance with civil rights laws.

LAWSUITS AND DISPUTES: If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose health information about you in response to a court or administrative order. Subject to all applicable legal requirements, we may also disclose health information about you in response to a subpoena.

LAW ENFORCEMENT: We may release health information if asked to do so by a law enforcement official in response to a court order, subpoena, warrant, summons or similar process, subject to all applicable legal requirements.

CORONERS, MEDICAL EXAMINERS AND FUNERAL DIRECTORS: We may release health information to a coroner or medical examiner. This may be necessary, for example, to identify a deceased person or determine the cause of death. We may disclose your health information to funeral directors to carry out their duties. We may disclose your health information for organ, eye or tissue donation purposes.

INFORMATION NOT PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE: We may use or disclose health information about you in a way that does not personally identify you or reveal who you are.

ABUSE OR NEGLECT: We may disclose your health information to appropriate authorities if we reasonably believe that you are a possible victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence or the possible victim of other crimes. We may disclose your health information to the extent necessary to avert a serious threat to your health or safety or the health or safety of other.

NATIONAL SECURITY: We may disclose to military authorities the health information of Armed Forces personnel under certain circumstances. We may disclose, to authorized federal officials health information required for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence and other national security activities. We may disclose to a correctional institution or a law enforcement official having lawful custody of protected health information of inmate or patient under certain circumstances.

APPOINTMENT REMINDERS: We may use or disclose your health information to provide you with appointment reminders (such as voice mail messages, postcards or letters).

Any other use or disclosure of private health care information, other than those listed above will only be made with written authorization which will specifically identify the information we seek to use/disclose and how we seek to use/disclose it. Authorization may be revoked at any time, in writing, except for the extent that we have already used/disclosed the information in reliance on the authorization.

PATIENT RIGHTS

NOTIFICATION IN THE CASE OF A BREACH: We are required by law to notify you in the event of a breach of your unsecured protected health information.

ACCESS: You have the right to look at or get copies of your health information, with limited exceptions. You may request that we provide copies in a format other than photocopies. We will use the format you request unless we cannot practicably do so. (You must make a request in writing to obtain access to your health information. You may obtain a form to request access by using the contact information listed at the end of this Notice. We will charge you a reasonable cost-based fee for expenses such as copies and staff time. You may also request access by sending us a letter, fax or email to the address at the end of this Notice. If you request copies we will charge you \$0.50 for each page, \$25.00 per hour for staff time to locate and copy your health information, and postage if you want the copies mailed to you. If you request an alternative format, we will charge a cost-based fee for providing your health information in that format. Information held electronically will be provided in electronic form if requested. If you prefer, we will prepare a summary or an explanation of your health information for a fee. Contact us using the information listed at the end of this Notice for a full explanation of our fee structure.)

DISCLOSURE ACCOUNTING: You have the right to receive a list of instances in which we or our business associates disclosed your health information for purposes, other than treatment, payment, healthcare operations and certain other activities, for the last 6 years, but not before April 14, 2003. If you request this accounting more than once in a 12-month period, we may charge you a reasonable, cost-based fee for responding to these additional requests.

RESTRICTION: You have the right to request that we place additional restrictions on our use or disclosure of your health information for purposes of treatment, payment, health care operations or communications with family. Generally, we are not required to agree to a restriction. However, we must agree to a restriction that we will not disclose your private health care information to a health plan for payment if you have paid in full for the service/device provided in that visit.

ALTERNATE COMMUNICATION: You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your health information by alternative means or alternative locations. (You must make your request in writing.) Your request must specify the alternative means or location and provide satisfactory explanation how payments will be handled under the alternative means or location you request.

AMENDMENT: You have the right to request that we amend your health information. (Your request must be in writing and it must explain why the information should be amended.) We may deny your request under certain circumstances.

ELECTRONIC NOTICE: If you receive this Notice on our website or by electronic mail (e-mail), you are entitled to receive this Notice in written form.

QUESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

If you want more information about our privacy practices or have questions or concerns, please contact us. If you are concerned that we may have violated your privacy rights, or you disagree with a decision we made about access to your health information or in response to a request you made to amend or restrict the use or disclosure of your health information or to have us communicate with you by alternative means or at alternative locations, you may complain to us using the contact information listed at the end of this Notice. You also may submit a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We will provide you with the address to file your complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services upon request.

We support your right to the privacy of your health information. We will not retaliate in any way if you choose to file a complaint with us or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Privacy Contact: Holly Schutts

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