

# NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES-HIPAA

*THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.*

## **UNDERSTANDING YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION**

Each time you visit our office, we make a record of your visit in order to manage the care you receive. We understand that the medical information that is recorded about you and your health is personal. The confidentiality and privacy of your health information is also protected under both state and federal law. This Notice of Privacy Practices describes how this office may use and disclose your information and the rights that you have regarding your health information.

## **How We Will Use or Disclose Your Health Information**

Your protected health information may be used and disclosed by your therapist, our office staff and others outside of our office that are involved in your care and treatment for the purpose of providing health care services to you, to pay your health care bills, the support the operation of the physician's practice and any other use required by law.

**Payment:** We may use and disclose your health information to obtain payment for services we provide to you.

**Health Care Operations:** We will use and disclose your health information in connection with our regular health care operations. This information will then be used in a continued effort to improve the quality and effectiveness of the services we provide.

**Business Associates:** We may enter into contracts with persons or entities known as business associates that provide services to or perform functions on our behalf. Examples include our schools, accountants, consultants, and attorneys. We may disclose your health information to our business associates so they can perform the job we have asked them to do, once they have agreed in writing to safeguard your information.

**Notification:** We may use or disclose information to assist in notifying a family member, personal representative, or another person responsible to the extent necessary to help with your care, of your location, and general condition. If we are unable to reach your family member or personal representative, then we may leave a message for them at the phone number that they have provided to us, e.g., on an answering machine.

**Communication with Family:** We may disclose to a family member, other relative, close personal friend or any other person you identify, health information relevant to that person's involvement in your care or payment related to your care.

**Appointment Reminders / Health Benefits:** We may contact you to provide appointment reminders (such as voicemail messages, postcards, or letters).

**Public Health Activities:** As required by law, we may disclose your health information to public health, or legal authorities, charged with preventing or controlling disease, injury, or disability.

**Judicial and Administrative Proceedings:** We may disclose your health information in a judicial or administrative proceeding if the request for the information is through an order from a court or administrative tribunal. Such information may also be disclosed in response to a subpoena or other lawful process if certain assurances regarding notice to the individual or a protective order are provided.

**Victims of Abuse, Neglect, and Domestic Violence:** In certain circumstances, we may disclose your health information to appropriate government authorities if we believe that you are a possible victim of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence.

**Essential Government Functions:** We may disclose your health information for certain essential government functions (e.g., military activity and for national security purposes).

The following uses and disclosures will be made only with your authorization: (i) with limited exceptions, uses and disclosures of your health information for marketing purposes, including subsidized treatment communications; (ii) disclosures that constitute a sale of your health information; and (iii) other uses and disclosures not described in this notice. You may revoke your authorization at any time in writing, except to the extent that we have taken action in reliance on the use or disclosure indicated in the authorization.

**Your Health Information Rights:** Although your health record is the physical property of this office, you have the following rights with respect to your health information:

- You may request that we not use or disclose your health information for a particular reason related to treatment, payment, our general healthcare operations, and/or to a particular family member, other relatives or close personal friend. We ask that such requests be made in writing and given to our Privacy Officer. Although we will consider your request, please be aware that we are under no obligation to accept it or to abide by it, except as provided below.
- If you have paid for services out-of-pocket in full, you may request that we not disclose information related solely to those services to your health plan. We ask that such requests be made in writing and given to our Privacy Officer. We are required to abide by such a request, except where we are required by law to make a disclosure. We are not required to inform other providers of such a request, so you should notify any other providers regarding such a request.
- You have the right to receive confidential communications from us by alternative means or at an alternative location. Such a request must be made in writing and submitted to the Privacy Contact Officer. We will attempt to accommodate all reasonable requests.
- You may request to inspect and/or obtain copies of health information about you, which will be provided to you in the time frames established by law. If we maintain your health information electronically in a designated record set, you may obtain an electronic copy of the information. If you request a copy (paper or electronic), we will charge you a fee of \$.99 for each page and postage if you want the copies mailed to you.
- If you believe that any health information in your record is incorrect, or if you believe that important information is missing, you may request that we correct the existing information or add the missing information. Such requests must be made in writing and must provide a reason to support the amendment. We ask that you provide such a request to our Privacy Officer.
- You may request that we provide you with a written accounting of all disclosures made by us during the time period for which you request (not to exceed six years), as required by law. We ask that such requests be made in writing and provided to our Privacy Officer. Please note that accounting does not include all disclosures, e.g., disclosures to carry out treatment, payment, or healthcare operations and disclosures made to you or your legal representative or pursuant to an authorization. You will not be charged for your first accounting request in any 12-month period. However, for any requests that you make thereafter, you will be charged a reasonable, cost based fee.
- You have the right to be notified following a breach of your unsecured protected health information.
- You have the right to obtain a paper copy of our Notice of Privacy Practices upon request.

**For More Information or to Report a Problem:** You have the right to complain to us and to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) if you believe we have violated your privacy rights. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint. For more information or to file a complaint with us, contact our Privacy Officer by phone, email or mail as follows:

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