

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION.

How we may use and disclose medical information about you:

Treatment: We may use and disclose medical information about you to provide healthcare treatment to you. In other words, we may use and disclose medical information about you to provide, coordinate or manage your healthcare and related services. This may include communicating with other healthcare providers regarding your treatment and coordinating and managing your healthcare with others.

Payment: We may use and disclose medical information about you to obtain payment for healthcare services that you received. This means that we may use medical information about you to arrange for payment (such as preparing bills and managing accounts). We also may *disclose* medical information about you to others (such as insurers, collection agencies, and consumer reporting agencies). In some instances, we may disclose medical information about you to an insurance plan *before* you receive certain healthcare services because, for example, we may need to know whether the insurance plan will pay for a particular service.

Healthcare Operations: We may use and disclose medical information about you in performing a variety of business activities that we call "healthcare operations." These "healthcare operations" activities allow us to, for example, improve the quality of care we provide and reduce healthcare costs. For example, we may use or disclose medical information about you in performing the following activities: reviewing and evaluating the skills, qualifications, and performance of healthcare providers taking care of you; providing training programs for students, trainees, healthcare providers or non-healthcare professionals to help them practice or improve their skills; cooperating with outside organizations that evaluate, certify or license healthcare providers, staff or facilities in a particular field or specialty; reviewing and improving the quality, efficiency and cost of care that we provide to you and our other patients; improving healthcare and lowering costs for groups of people who have similar health problems and helping manage and coordinate the care for these groups of people; cooperating with outside organizations that assess the quality of the care others and we provide, including government agencies and private organizations; planning for our organization's future operations; resolving grievances within our organization; reviewing our activities and using or disclosing medical information in the event that control of our organization significantly changes; working with others (such as lawyers, accountants and other providers) who assist us to comply with this Notice and other applicable laws.

Persons Involved in Your Care: We may disclose medical information about you to a relative, close personal friend or any other person you identify if that person is involved in your care and the information is relevant to your care. If the patient is a minor, we may disclose medical information about the minor to a parent, guardian or other person responsible for the minor except in limited circumstances. For more information on the privacy of minors' information, contact our Privacy Officer. We may also use or disclose medical information about you to a relative, another person involved in your care or possibly a disaster relief organization (such as the Red Cross) if we need to notify someone about your location or condition. You may ask us at any time not to disclose medical information about you to persons involved in your care. We will agree to your request and not disclose the information except in certain limited circumstances (such as emergencies) or if the patient is a minor. If the patient is a minor, we may or may not be able to agree to your request.

Required by Law: We will use and disclose medical information about you whenever we are required by law to do so. There are many state and federal laws that require us to use and disclose medical information. For example, state law requires us to report gunshot wounds and other injuries to the police and to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services. We will comply with those state laws and with all other applicable laws.

National Priority Uses and Disclosures: When permitted by law, we may use or disclose medical information about you without your permission for various activities that are recognized as "national priorities." In other words, the government has determined that under certain circumstances (described below), it is so important to disclose medical information that it is acceptable to disclose medical information without the individual's permission. We will only disclose medical information about you in the following circumstances when we are permitted to do so by law. Below are brief descriptions of the "national priority" activities recognized by law. For more information on these types of disclosures, contact our Privacy Officer: threat to health or safety, public health activities, abuse, neglect or domestic violence, health oversight activities, court proceedings, law enforcement, coroners, medical examiner, or funeral or to organizations that help with organ, eye and tissue transplants, workers' compensation, research organizations, certain government functions including but not limited to military and veterans' activities and national security and intelligence activities. We may also use or disclose medical information about you to a correctional institution in some circumstances.

Authorizations: Other than the uses and disclosures described above, we will not use or disclose medical information about you without the "authorization" – or signed permission – of you or your personal representative. In some instances, we may wish to use or disclose medical information about you and we may contact you to ask you to sign an authorization form. In other instances, you may contact us to ask us to disclose medical information and we will ask you to sign an authorization form. If you sign a written authorization allowing us to disclose medical information about you, you may later revoke (or cancel) your authorization in writing (except in very limited circumstances related to obtaining insurance coverage). If you would like to revoke your authorization, you may write us a letter revoking your authorization or fill out an Authorization Revocation Form. Authorization Revocation Forms are available from our Privacy Officer. If you revoke your authorization, we will follow your instructions except to the extent that we have already relied upon your authorization and taken some action.

The following uses and disclosures of medical information about you will only be made with your authorization (signed permission): Uses and disclosures for marketing purposes; uses and disclosures that constitute the sales of medical information about you; most uses and disclosures of psychotherapy notes, if we maintain psychotherapy notes; any other uses and disclosures not described in this Notice.

YOU HAVE RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

You have several rights with respect to medical information about you. This section of the Notice will briefly mention each of these rights. If you would like to know more about your rights, please contact our Privacy Officer.

Right to a Copy of This Notice: You have the right to a paper copy of this notice. You may ask us to give you a copy of this notice at any time.

Right of Access to Inspect and Copy: You have the right to inspect (which means see or review) and receive a copy of medical information about you that we maintain in certain groups of records. If we maintain your medical records in an Electronic Health Record (EHR) system, you may obtain an electronic copy of your medical records. You may also instruct us in writing to send an electronic copy of your medical records to a third party. If you would like to inspect or receive a copy of medical information about you, you must provide us with a request in writing. You may write us a letter requesting access or fill out an **Access Request Form**. Access Request Forms are available from our Privacy Officer. We may deny your request in certain circumstances. If we deny your request, we will explain our reason for doing so in writing. We will also inform you in writing if you have the right to have our decision reviewed by another person. If you would like a copy of the medical information about you, we will charge you a fee to cover the costs of the copy. We may be able to provide you with a summary or explanation of the information. Contact our Privacy Officer for more information on these services and any possible additional fees.

Right to Have Medical Information Amended: You have the right to have us amend (which means correct or supplement) medical information about you that we maintain in certain groups of records. If you believe that we have information that is either inaccurate or incomplete, we may amend the information to indicate the problem and notify others who have copies of the inaccurate or incomplete information. If you would like us to amend information, you must provide us with a request in writing and explain why you would like us to amend the information. You may either write us a letter requesting an amendment or fill out an **Amendment Request Form**. Amendment Request Forms are available from our Privacy Officer. We may deny your request in certain circumstances. If we deny your request, we will explain our reason for doing so in writing. You will have the opportunity to send us a statement explaining why you disagree with our decision to deny your amendment request and we will share your statement whenever we disclose the information in the future.

Right to an Accounting of Disclosures We Have Made: You have the right to receive an accounting (which means a detailed listing) of disclosures that we have made for the previous six (6) years. If you would like to receive an accounting, you may send us a letter requesting an accounting, fill out an **Accounting Request Form**, or contact our Privacy Officer. Accounting Request Forms are available from our Privacy Officer. The accounting will not include several types of disclosures, including disclosures for treatment, payment or healthcare operations. If we maintain your medical records in an Electronic Health Record (EHR) system, you may request that include disclosures for treatment, payment or healthcare operations. The accounting will also not include disclosures made prior to April 14, 2003. If you request an accounting more than once every twelve (12) months, we may charge you a fee to cover the costs of preparing the accounting.

Right to Request Restrictions on Uses and Disclosures: You have the right to request that we limit the use and disclosure of medical information about you for treatment, payment and healthcare operations. Under federal law, we must agree to your request and comply with your requested restriction(s) if, except as otherwise required by law, the disclosure is to a health plan for purpose of carrying out payment of healthcare operations (and is not for purposes of carrying out treatment); and, the medical information pertains solely to a healthcare item or service for which the healthcare provided involved has been paid out-of-pocket in full. Once we agree to your request, we must follow your restrictions (except if the information is necessary for emergency treatment). You may cancel the restrictions at any time. In addition, we may cancel a restriction at any time as long as we notify you of the cancellation and continue to apply the restriction to information collected before the cancellation. You also have the right to request that we restrict disclosures of your medical information and healthcare treatment(s) to a health plan (health insurer) or other party, when that information relates solely to a healthcare item or service for which you, or another person on your behalf (other than a health plan), has paid us for in full. Once you have requested such restriction(s), and your payment in full has been received, we must follow your restriction(s).

Right to Request an Alternative Method of Contact: You have the right to request to be contacted at a different location or by a different method. We will agree to any reasonable request for alternative methods of contact. If you would like to request an alternative method of contact, you must provide us with a request in writing. You may write us a letter or fill out an **Alternative Contact Request Form**. Alternative Contact Request Forms are available from our Privacy Officer.

Right to Notification if a Breach of Your Medical Information Occurs: You also have the right to be notified in the event of a breach of medical information about you. If a breach of your medical information occurs, and if that information is unsecured (not encrypted), we will notify you promptly with the following information: A brief description of what happened; a description of the health information that was involved; recommended steps you can take to protect yourself from harm; what steps we are taking in response to the breach; and, contact procedures so you can obtain further information.

Right to Opt-Out of Fundraising Communications: If we conduct fundraising and we use communications like the U.S. Postal Service or electronic email for fundraising, you have the right to opt-out of receiving such communications from us. Please contact our Privacy Officer to opt-out of fundraising communications if you chose to do so.

YOU MAY FILE A COMPLAINT ABOUT OUR PRIVACY PRACTICES

If you believe that your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a written complaint either with us or with the federal government. We will not take any action against you or change our treatment of you in any way if you file a complaint. To file a written complaint with us, you may bring your complaint directly to our Privacy Officer. **To file a written complaint with the federal government, please use the following contact information:**

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201

Toll-Free Phone: 1-(877) 696-6775

Website: <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/complaints/index.html>

Email: OCCRCComplaint@hhs.gov