
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 April 14, 2003, 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 the 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.

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

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 professionals, evaluation practitioner and provider performance, conducting training programs, accreditation, certification, licensing or credentialing activities.

YOUR AUTHORIZATION: In addition to our use of your health information for treatment, payment or healthcare operations, you may give us written authorization to use your health information or to 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.

TO YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS: We must disclose your health information to you, as described in the Patient Rights section of this Notice. We may disclose your health information to a family member, friend or other person to the extent necessary to help with your healthcare, but only if you agree that we may do so.

PERSONS INVOLVED IN CARE: 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.

MARKETING HEALTH-RELATED SERVICES: We will not use your health information for marketing communications without your written authorization.

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

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 others.

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

PATIENT RIGHTS

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 to your health information. You may obtain a form to request access by using the contact information listed at the end of this Notice.

QUESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

If you want more information about our privacy practices or have questions, 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 alternating means or at alternative locations, you may complain to us using the contact information listed at the end of this Notice. You may also 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.