

Patient Notice of Privacy Practices

As Required by the Privacy Regulations Created as a Result of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996-(HIPAA) Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH Act), and associated regulations and amendments. **This notice describes how health information about you may be used and disclosed, and how you can get access to this information.**

PLEASE REVIEW THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY

ABOUT THIS NOTICE

We understand that health information about you is personal and we are committed to protecting your information. We create a record of the care and services you receive. We need this record to provide care (treatment), for payment of care provided, for health care operations, and to comply with certain legal requirements. This Notice will tell you about the ways in which we may use and disclose health information about you. It also describes your rights and certain obligations we have regarding the use and disclosure of health information. We are required by law to follow the terms of this Notice that is currently in effect.

WHAT IS PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION (“PHI”)

PHI is information that individually identifies you. We create a record or get from you or from another health care provider, health plan, your employer, or a healthcare clearinghouse that relates to:

- Your past, present, or future physical or mental health or conditions,
- The provision of health care to you, or
- The past, present, or future payment for your health care.

HOW WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE YOUR PHI

We may use and disclose your PHI in the following circumstances:

- **Treatment.** We may use or disclose your PHI to give you medical treatment or services and to manage and coordinate your medical care. For example, your PHI may be provided to a physician or other health care provider (e.g., a specialist or laboratory) to whom you have been referred to ensure that the physician or other health care provider has the necessary information to diagnose or treat you or provide you with a service.
- **Payment.** We may use and disclose your PHI so that we can bill for the treatment and services you receive from us and can collect payment from you, a health plan, or a third party. This use and disclosure may include certain activities that your health insurance plan may undertake before it approves or pays for the health care services we recommend for you, such as making a determination of eligibility or coverage for insurance benefits, reviewing services provided to you for medical necessity, and undertaking utilization review activities. For example, we may need to give your health plan information about your treatment in order for your health plan to agree to pay for that treatment.
- **Appointment Reminders/Treatment Alternatives/Health-Related Benefits and Services.** We may use and disclose PHI to contact you to remind you that you have an appointment for medical care, or to contact you to tell you about possible treatment options or alternatives or health related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.
- **Minors.** We may disclose the PHI of minor children to their parents or guardians unless such disclosure is otherwise prohibited by law.
- **As Required by Law.** We will disclose PHI about you when required to do so by international, federal, state, or local law.
- **To Avert a Serious Threat to Health or Safety.** We may use and disclose PHI when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health or safety or to the health or safety of others. But we will only disclose the information to someone who may be able to help prevent the threat.
- **Business Associates.** We may disclose PHI to our business associates who perform functions on our behalf or provide us with services if the PHI is necessary for those functions or services. For example, we may use another company to do our billing, or to provide transcription or consulting services for us. All of our business associates are obligated, under contract with us, to protect the privacy and ensure the security of your PHI.

- **Military and Veterans.** If you are a member of the armed forces, we may disclose PHI as required by military command authorities. We also may disclose PHI to the appropriate foreign military authority if you are a member of a foreign military.
- **Workers' Compensation.** We may use or disclose PHI for workers' compensation or similar programs that provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness.
- **Public Health Risks.** We may disclose PHI for public health activities. This includes disclosures to: (1) a person subject to the jurisdiction of the Food and Drug Administration ("FDA") for purposes related to the quality, safety or effectiveness of an FDA-regulated product or activity; (2) prevent or control disease, injury or disability; (3) report births and deaths; (4) report child abuse or neglect; (5) report reactions to medications or problems with products; (6) notify people of recalls of products they may be using; and (7) a person who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk for contracting or spreading a disease or condition.
- **Abuse, Neglect, or Domestic Violence.** We may disclose PHI to the appropriate government authority if we believe a patient has been the victim of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence and the patient agrees or we are required or authorized by law to make that disclosure.
- **Health Oversight Activities.** We may disclose PHI to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. These oversight activities include, for example, audits, investigations, inspections, licensure, and similar activities that are necessary for the government to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws.
- **Data Breach Notification Purposes.** We may use or disclose your PHI to provide legally required notices of unauthorized access to or disclosure of your health information.
- **Lawsuits and Disputes.** If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose PHI in response to a court or administrative order. We also may disclose PHI in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or other legal process from someone else involved in the dispute, but only if efforts have been made to tell you about the request or to get an order protecting the information requested. We may also use or disclose your PHI to defend ourselves in the event of a lawsuit.
- **Uses and Disclosures That Require Us to Give You an Opportunity to Object and Opt Out**
 - **Individuals Involved in Your Care.** Unless you object in writing, we may disclose to a member of your family, a relative, a close friend or any other person you identify, your PHI that directly relates to that person's involvement in your health care. If you are unable to agree or object to such a disclosure, we may disclose such information as necessary if we determine that it is in your best interest based on our professional judgment.
 - **Payment for Your Care.** Unless you object in writing, you can exercise your rights under HIPAA that your healthcare provider not disclose information about services received when you pay in full out of pocket for the service and refuse to file a claim with your health plan.
 - **Disaster Relief.** We may disclose your PHI to disaster relief organizations that seek your PHI to coordinate your care, or notify family and friends of your location or condition in a disaster. We will provide you with an opportunity to agree or object to such a disclosure whenever we practicably can do so.

Your Written Authorization if Required for Other Uses and Disclosures

The following uses and disclosures of your PHI will be made only with your written authorization:

- Most uses and disclosures of psychotherapy notes;
- Uses and disclosures of PHI for marketing purposes; and
- Disclosures that constitute a sale of your PHI.

Other uses and disclosures of PHI not covered by this Notice or the laws that apply to us will be made only with your written authorization. If you do give us an authorization, you may revoke it at any time by submitting a written revocation to our Privacy Officer and we will no longer disclose PHI under the authorization. But disclosure that we made in reliance on your authorization before you revoked it will not be affected by the revocation.