

Notice of Privacy Practices of Protected Health Information



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.

Your health record contains personal information about you and your health. This information, which may identify you relates to your past, present or future mental and/or physical health or condition and related health care services, is referred to as Protected Health Information (“PHI”). This Notice of Privacy Practices describes how we may use and disclose your PHI in accordance with applicable law. It also describes your rights regarding how you may gain access to and control your PHI. We are required by law to maintain the privacy of PHI and to provide you with notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to PHI. We are required to abide by the terms of this Notice of Privacy Practices. We reserve the right to change the terms of our Notice of Privacy Practices at any time. Any new Notice of Privacy Practices will be effective for all PHI that we maintain at that time. We will provide you with a copy of the revised Notice of Privacy Practices by posting a copy on our website, sending a copy to you in the mail upon request, or providing one to you at your next appointment.

How We May Use and Disclose Health Information About You:

Treatment

Your PHI may be used and disclosed by those who are involved in your care for the purpose of providing, coordinating, or managing your health care treatment and related services. This includes consultation with clinical supervisors or other treatment team members. We may only disclose PHI to any other consultant only with your authorization.

Payment

We are permitted to use and disclose your PHI to bill and collect payment for the services we provide to you. This will only be done with your authorization. Examples of payment-related activities are: making a determination of eligibility or coverage for insurance benefits, processing claims with your insurance company, reviewing services provided to you to determine medical necessity, or undertaking utilization review activities. If it becomes necessary to use collection processes due to lack of payment for services, we will only disclose the minimum amount of PHI necessary for purposes of collection.

Health Care Operations

We may use or disclose, as needed, your PHI in order to support the business activities of our practice. These activities include, but are not limited to, quality assessment activities, employee review activities, reminding you of appointments, training of graduate students, licensing, marketing and conducting or arranging for other business activities. For example, we may disclose your PHI to practicum students that see patients at our office. We may also call you by name in the waiting room when your therapist is ready to see you.

We may share your PHI with third party “business associates” that perform various activities (e.g., billing, collection, transcription services) for the practice. Whenever an arrangement between our office and a business associate involves the use or disclosure of your PHI, we will have a written contract that contains terms that will protect the privacy of your PHI. We may use or disclose your PHI, as necessary, to provide you with information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you. We may also use and disclose your PHI for other marketing activities.

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Required by Law: Under the law, we must make disclosures of your PHI to you upon your request. In addition, we must make disclosures to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services for the purpose of investigating or determining our compliance with the requirements of the Privacy Rule.

Disclosures That Can Be Made Without Your Authorization

Following is a list of the categories of uses and disclosures permitted by HIPAA without an authorization:

Abuse and Neglect	Judicial and Administrative Proceedings
Emergencies	Law Enforcement
National Security	Public Safety (Duty to Warn)

Without Authorization: Applicable law and ethical standards permit us to disclose information about you without your authorization only in a limited number of other situations. The types of uses and disclosures that may be made without your authorization are those that are: Required by law, such as the mandatory reporting of child abuse or neglect or mandatory government agency audits or investigations (such as the social work licensing board or health department), Required by court order, Necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public. If information is disclosed to prevent or lessen a serious threat, it will be disclosed to a person or persons reasonably able to prevent or lessen the threat, including the target of the threat.

Verbal Permission: We may use or disclose your information to family members that are directly involved in your treatment with your verbal permission.

With Authorization: Uses and disclosures not specifically permitted by applicable law will be made only with your written authorization, which may be revoked.

Your Rights Regarding Your PHI

- Right of Access to Inspect and Copy. You have the right, which may be restricted only in exceptional circumstances, to inspect and copy PHI that may be used to make decisions about your care. Your right to inspect and copy PHI will be restricted only in those situations where there is compelling evidence that access would cause serious harm to you. We may charge a reasonable, cost-based fee for copies.
- Right to Amend. If you feel that the PHI we have about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information, although we are not required to agree to the amendment.
- Right to an Accounting of Disclosures. You have the right to request an accounting of the disclosures that we make of your PHI. We may charge you a reasonable fee if you request more than one accounting in any 12-month period.
- Right to Request Restrictions. You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the use or disclosure of your PHI for treatment, payment, or health care operations. We are not required to agree to your request.
- Right to Request Confidential Communication. You have the right to request that we communicate with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location.
- Right to a Copy of this Notice. You have the right to a copy of this Notice.

Complaints

If you believe we have violated your privacy rights, you have the right to file a complaint in writing with the Secretary of Health and Human Services at 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., 20201, or by calling (202) 619-0257. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint