

# NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED & DISCLOSED & 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 & 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, & our 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 4/1/03, & will remain in effect until we replace it.

We reserve the right to change our privacy practices & 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 & 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 Notices & make the new Notice available upon request. You may request a copy of our Notice at any time.

## USES & DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION

We use & disclose information about you for treatment, payment, & healthcare options. For example:

-Treatment: We may disclose your health information to a physician or other healthcare provider providing treatment to you.

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

-Healthcare operations: We may use & disclose your information in connection with our healthcare operations. Healthcare operations include quality assessment & improvement activities, reviewing the competence or qualifications of healthcare professionals, evaluating practitioner & provider performance, conducting training programs, accreditation, certification, licensing or credentialing activities.

-Your Authorization: In addition to our use if your health information for treatment, payment or healthcare operations, you may give us written authorization to use your healthcare information to disclose it to anyone for any purpose. If you give us an authorization, you may revoke it in writing at anytime. Your revocation will not affect any use or disclosures permitted by your authorization while it was 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 & 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 or with payment for 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 you care, of your location, your general condition, or death. If you are present, than prior to use or disclosure of you health information, we will provide you with an opportunity to object to such uses or disclosures. In the event of your incapacity or emergency circumstances, we will disclose health information based on a determination using our professional judgment disclosing only health information that is directly relevant to the person's involvement in your healthcare. We will use our professional judgment & our experience with common practice to make reasonable inferences of your best interest in allowing a person to pick up filled prescriptions, medical supplies, x-rays, or other similar forms of health information.

-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 so 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.

-National Security: We may disclose to military authorities the health information of Armed Forces personal under circumstances. We may disclose to authorized federal official's health information required for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence, & other national security activities. We may disclose to correctional institutions or law enforcement official having lawful custody of protected health information of inmate or patient under circumstances.

-Appointment Reminders: We use or disclose your health information to provide you with appointment reminders (i.e. 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 you 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 listed at the end of this Notice. We will charge you a reasonable cost-based fee for expenses such as copies & staff time. You may also request access by sending us a letter to the address at the end of this Notice. If you request copies, we will charge you \$10 for each page, \$10 per hour for staff time to locate & copy your health information in that format. If you prefer, we will prepare a summary or an explanation of your health information for a fee.

Disclosure Accounting: You have a right to receive a list of instances in which we or our business associates disclosed your health information for purposes, other than treatment, payment, healthcare operations & certain other activities, for the past 0 years, but not before April 14, 2003. If you request this accounting information more than once in a 12-month period, we may charge you a reasonable, cost-based fee for responding to these additional requests.