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HIPAA 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. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

This Notice of Privacy Practices describes how we may use and disclose your protected health information (PHI) to carry out treatment, payment of health care operations (TPO) and for other purposes that are permitted or required by law. It also describes your rights to access and control your protected health information. "Protected health information" is information about you, including demographic information that may identify you. This information relates to your past, present or future physical or mental health or condition and related health care services.

Uses and Disclosure of Protected Health Information

Your protected health information may be used and disclosed by your physician, our office staff and others outside our office that are involved in your care and treatment for the purpose of providing health care services to you, to pay your health care bills,, to support the operation of the physician's practice and any other use required by law.

Treatment: We will use and disclose your protected health information to provide, coordinate, or manage your health care and any related services. This includes the coordination or management of your health care with a third party. For example, your protected health information may be provided to a physician to whom you have been referred to ensure that the physician has the necessary information to diagnose or treat you.

Payment: Your protected health information will be used, as needed, to obtain payment for your health care services. For example, obtaining approval for a hospital stay may require that your relevant protected health information be disclosed to the health plan to obtain approval for the hospital admission.

Health Care Operation: We may use or disclose, as needed, your protected health information in order to support the business activities of your physician's practice. The activities include, but are not limited to, quality assessment activities. For example, we may disclose your protected health information to medical school students that see patients in our office. In addition, we may use or disclose your protected health information, as necessary, to contact you to remind you of your appointment.

We may use or disclose your protected health information in the following situations without your authorization. These situations include: as Required By Law, Public Health Issues as required by law, Communicable Diseases, Health Oversight, Abuse or Neglect, Food and Drug Administration requirements, Legal Proceedings, Law Enforcement, Coroners, Funeral Directors, Organ Donation, Research, Criminal Activity, Military Activity and National Security, Workers' Compensation, Inmates, Required Uses and Disclosures. Under the law, we must make disclosures to you when required by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to investigate or determine our compliance with the requirements of section 164.500.

Other permitted and required uses and disclosures will be made only with your consent, authorization or with opportunity to object unless required by law.

You may revoke this authorization at any time, in writing, except to the extent that your physician or physician's practice has taken an action in reliance on the use or disclosure indicated in the authorization.

Your Rights:

Following is a statement of your rights with respect to your protected health information.

You have the right to request a restriction of your protected health information. This means you may ask us not to use or disclose any part of your protected health information for the purposes of treatment, payment or healthcare operations. You may also request that any part of your protected health information not be disclosed to family members or friends who may be involved in your care for notification purposes as described in this Notice of Privacy Practices. Your request must state the specific restriction requested and to whom you want the restriction to apply.

Your physician is not required to agree to a restriction that you may request. If the physician believes it is in your best interest to permit use and disclosure of you protected health information, your protected health information will not be restricted. You then have the right to use another Healthcare Professional.

You have the right to request to receive confidential communications from us by alternative means or at an alternative location. You have the right to obtain a copy of this notice from us, upon request.

You may have the right to have your physician amend your protected health information. If we deny your request for amendment, you have the right to file a statement of disagreement with us and we may prepare a rebuttal to your statement and will provide you with a copy of any such rebuttal.

You have the right to receive an accounting of certain disclosures we may have, if any, of your protected health information.

We reserve the right to change the terms of this notice. You then have the right to object or withdraw as provided in this notice.

Complaints

You may complain to us or to the Secretary of Health and Human Services if you believe we have violated your privacy rights. You may file a complaint with us by notifying out privacy contact of your complaint. We will NOT retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

This notice was published and becomes effective on/or before April 14, 2003.