



NOTICE OF INFORMATION PRACTICES

This notice describes how information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. Please review it carefully.

Patient Health Information

Under federal law, your patient health information is protected and confidential. Patient health information includes information about your symptoms, test results, diagnosis, treatment, and related medical information. Your health information also includes payment, billing, and insurance information.

How we use your patient health information

We use health information about you for treatment, to obtain payment, and for health care operation. All other request must have an authorization signed by you or your legal representative.

This notice gives examples of how we will use or disclose your health information for treatment, payment, and health care operations. The notice also describes circumstances when we may have to use or disclose the information even without your authorization.

Examples of treatment, payment, and health care operations

Treatment: We will use and disclose your health information to provide you with medical treatment or services. For example, nurses, physicians, and other members of your treatment team will record information in your record and use it to determine the most appropriate course of care. We may also disclose the information to other health care providers who are participating in your treatment, to pharmacists who are filling your prescriptions, and to family members who are helping with your care.

Payment: We will use and disclose your health information for payment purposes. For example, we may need to obtain authorization from your insurance company before providing certain types of treatment. We will submit bills and maintain records of payments from your health plan.

Health Care Operations: We will use and disclose your health information to conduct our standard internal operations, including proper administration of records, evaluation of the quality of treatment, and to assess the care and outcomes of your case and others like it.

Special uses

We may use your information to contact you with appointment reminders. We may also contact you to provide information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

Other uses and disclosures

We may use or disclose identifiable health information about you for other reasons, even without your authorization. Subject to certain requirements, we are permitted to give out health information without your consent for the following purposes:

- ***Required by law:*** We may be required by law to report gunshot wounds, suspected abuse or neglect, or similar injuries and events.
- ***Public health activities:*** As required by law, we may disclose vital statistics, diseases, information related to recalls of dangerous products to public health authorities, and similar information.

- *Health oversight:* We may be required to disclose information to assist in investigations and audits, eligibility for government programs, and similar activities.
- *Judicial and administrative proceedings:* We may disclose information in response to an appropriate subpoena or court order.
- *Law enforcement purposes:* Subject to certain restrictions, we may disclose information required by law enforcement officials.
- *Deaths:* We may report information regarding deaths to coroners, medical examiners, and funeral directors.
- *Serious threat to health or safety:* We may use and disclose information when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health and safety of the public or another person.
- *Military and Veterans:* If you are a member of the armed forces, we may release information as required by military command authorities.
- *Research:* We may use or disclose information for approved medical research
- *Workers Compensation:* We may release information about you for workers compensation or similar programs providing compensation or similar programs providing benefits for work-related injuries or illness.

In any other situation, we will ask for your written authorization before using or disclosing any identifiable health information about you.

Individual Rights

You have the following rights with regard to your health information. Please contact the person listed below to obtain the appropriate form for exercising these rights.

Request Restrictions: You may request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of your health information. We are not required to agree to such restrictions, but if we do agree, we must abide by those restrictions.

Confidential Communications: You may ask us to communicate with you confidentially by, for example, sending notices to a special address.

Inspect and Obtain Copies: In most cases, you have the right to look at or get a copy of your health information. There is a copy charge of \$10.00 for copies.

Amend Information: If you believe that information in your record is incorrect, or important information is missing, you have the right to request that we correct the existing information or add the missing information.

Accounting of Disclosures: You may request a list of instances where we have disclosed health information about you for reasons other than treatment, payment, or health care operations.

Our Legal Duty

We are required by law to protect and maintain the privacy of your health information, to provide this notice about our legal duties and privacy practices regarding protected health information, and to abide by the terms of the notice currently in effect.

Changes in Privacy Practices

We may change our policies at anytime. Before we make a significant change in our policies, we will change our notice.

Complaints

If you are concerned that we have violated your privacy rights, or if you disagree with a decision we made about your records, you may contact the privacy officer at the number listed below. You also may send a written complaint to the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. The privacy officer at our office will provide you with the appropriate address upon request. You will not be penalized in any way for filing a complaint.

If you have any questions, requests, or complaints, please contact our office at (423) 245-6101.