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Notice of Privacy 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.

Understanding Your Health Record/Information

Each time you visit a hospital, physician, or other healthcare provider, a record of your visit is made. Typically, this record contains your personal information, symptoms, examination and test results, diagnoses, treatment, and a plan for future care or treatment. This information is referred to as your health or medical record.

Our Responsibilities

This organization is required to:

- maintain the privacy of your health information
- provide you with a notice as to our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to information we collect and maintain about you
- abide by the terms of this notice
- notify you if we are unable to agree to a requested restriction
- accommodate reasonable requests you may have to communicate health information by alternative means or at alternative locations.

We reserve the right to change our practices and to make the new provisions effective for all protected health information we maintain. Should our information practices change substantially, we will notify you. We will not use or disclose your health information without your written authorization, except as described in this notice.

We will use your health information for treatment.

For example: Information obtained by a nurse, physician, or other member of your healthcare team will be recorded in your record and used to help coordinate and manage care; to determine the course of treatment that should work best for you. We will also provide your physician or a subsequent healthcare provider with copies of various reports that should assist him or her in treating you.

We will use your health information for payment.

For example: A bill or eligibility inquiry may be sent to you or a third-party payer. The information on or accompanying the bill may include information that identifies you, as well as your diagnosis, procedures, and supplies used.

We will use your health information for regular health operations.

For example: Members of the medical staff, the risk or quality improvement manager, or members of the quality improvement team may use information in your health record to assess the care and outcomes in your case and others like it. This information will then be used in an effort to continually improve the quality and effectiveness of the healthcare and service we provide.

Other Permitted or Required Uses and Disclosures

- Business associates*: Examples include answering service, certain laboratory tests, copy service and billing service, etc. When these services are contracted, we may disclose your health information so that they can perform their job.
- Directory*: Unless you notify us that you object, we will use your name, location in the facility, general condition, and religious affiliation for directory purposes.
- Notification*: We may use or disclose information to notify or assist in notifying a family member, personal representative, or another person responsible for your care, your location, and general condition.
- Communication with family*: Unless you notify us that you object, health professionals, using their best judgement, may disclose to a family member, other relative, close personal friend or any other person you identify, health information relevant to that person's involvement in your care or payment related to your care.
- Research*: We may disclose your information to researchers for medical research purpose.
- Funeral directors*: We may disclose health information consistent with applicable law to carry out their duties.
- Organ procurement organizations*: Consistent with applicable law, we may disclose health information to organ procurement organizations or other entities engaged in tissue donation and transplant.
- Marketing*: We may contact you to provide appointment reminders or information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA)*: We may disclose to the FDA health information relative to adverse events with respect to food, supplements, product and product defects, or post marketing surveillance information to enable product recalls, repairs, or replacement.
- Workers compensation*: We may disclose health information to the extent authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with laws relating to workers compensation or other similar programs established by law.
- Public health*: As required by law, we may disclose your health information to public health or legal authorities charged with preventing or controlling disease, injury, or disability.
- Correctional institution*: Should you be an inmate of a correctional institution, we may disclose to the institution or agents thereof health information necessary for your health and the health and safety of other individuals.
- Law enforcement*: We may disclose health information for law enforcement purposes as required by law or in response to a valid subpoena.

Your Health Information Rights

You have the right to:

- request a restriction on certain uses and disclosures of your information
- obtain a paper copy of the notice of information practices upon request
- inspect and obtain a copy of your health record (fees will apply)
- amend your health record (request must be in writing with reason provided and fees may apply)
- obtain an accounting of disclosures of your health information
- request communications of your health information by alternative means or at alternative locations
- revoke your authorization to use or disclose health information except to the extent that action has already been taken

For More Information or to Report a Problem

If have questions and would like additional information, you may contact the director of health information management. If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you can file a complaint with the director of health information management or with the secretary of Health and Human Services. There will be no retaliation for filing a complaint.

Effective Date: 04/14/2003