

# HIPAA

## PATIENT PRIVACY RIGHTS

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### **Patient Rights (and How the facility is Supporting Those Rights)**

HIPAA privacy regulations ensure that patients have control over their medical information.

According to HIPAA, this information includes any information -- whether it is oral, written, or electronic -- that can be identified as belonging to them. This information is usually referred to as Protected Health Information, or PHI.

The privacy rules of HIPAA require that health care providers obtain a patient's written consent before using or disclosing the patient's protected health information for anything other than treatment, payment, healthcare operations, or where the law requires the disclosure.

### **The right to inspect and get a copy of your medical records.**

- This Facility has always had a policy of responding to your requests for medical records as quickly as possible. To ensure they are meeting the new HIPAA regulations, the medical records offices are implementing a tracking system.
- As in the past, a handling fee is often charged for making copies of medical records. This fee helps offset the cost of labor and copying.
- If you request copies, we will charge you \$35.00 for staff time to locate and copy your protected health information, and materials, and postage if you want the copies mailed to you.

### **The right to request correction of inaccurate health information.**

- The facility encourages patients first to go back to their physician or other provider if they discover there is a mistake in the medical record. If the physician or other provider will not change the medical record -- regardless of the reason -- the patient can file an addendum to the record.
- The Notice of Privacy Practices given to each new patient outlines how a patient can file such an addendum.

### **The right to find out where your health information has been shared for purposes other than care, payment, or health care operations.**

- In the past, health care providers sometimes shared patients' health information with other institutions for research or other purposes. Under HIPAA, each institution must keep track of where your health information has been shared. You can request an accounting of this information for up to six years, beginning with information collected after April 14, 2003, the date when healthcare organizations are required to implement HIPAA.

## **The right to request special restrictions on the use or disclosure of your health information.**

- The facility will continue to follow its policies of not releasing a patient's name, photo, or protected health information to the media or to anyone other than next of kin unless the patient (or guardian) has given permission. However, to ensure compliance with HIPAA regulations, that permission will now have to be written.
- In addition, every patient who is admitted to a health care facility will be given the opportunity to refuse to have his or her name listed in the health care facilities patient directory. If you agree to have your name in the directory, anyone may call the health care facility and be given limited information about you. The health care facility will be able to tell callers:
  - A one-word condition statement
  - Your location in the facilityThe health care facility will not provide any more information than this unless you give specific permission. For example, if your friend calls to ask whether you have had your baby yet, or whether you broke your leg, this information will not be released unless you have specifically given permission.
- Even after you have given permission for your information to be shared, you have the right to revoke that decision. The Notice of Privacy Practices explains how this can be accomplished.

## **The right to request that your protected health information be shared with you in a particular way.**

- If you prefer your health care provider to send your information to a certain address, or call you at a certain phone number, you have the right to request this, and the health care provider must comply with every reasonable request.

## **The right to see a provider's policy on confidentiality.**

- All entities within this facility will provide patients with a Notice of Privacy Practices. This printed brochure will be given to patients to read when they are first seen. It will also be a copy located at the front desk.

## **Questions and complaints**

If you want more information about our privacy practices or have questions or concerns, please contact us using the information below.

If you believe that we may have violated your privacy rights, or you disagree with a decision we made about access to your protected health information or in response to a request you made, you may complain to us using the contact information below. You also may submit a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We will provide you with the address to file your complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services upon request.

We support your right to protect the privacy of your protected health information. We will not retaliate in any way if you choose to file a complaint with us or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Name of Contact Person: Dr. John Venson

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