

# NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

## THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION.

State and Federal laws require us to maintain the privacy of your health information and to inform you about our privacy practices by providing you with this Notice. We must follow the privacy practices as described below. This Notice will take effect on January 1, 2011 and will remain in effect until we amend or replace it. It is our right to change our privacy practices provided law permits the changes. Before we make a significant change, this Notice will be amended to reflect the changes and we will make the new Notice available upon request. We reserve the right to make any changes in our privacy practices and the new terms of our Notice effective for all health information maintained, created and/or received by us before the date the changes are made. You may request a copy of our Privacy Notice at any time by contacting our Privacy Officer or the Practice Manager. Information on contacting us can be found at the end of this Notice.

### TYPICAL USES AND DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION

We will keep your health information confidential, using it only for the following purposes:

**Treatment:** We may use your health information to provide you with our professional services. We have established “minimum necessary or need to know” standards that limit various staff members access to your health information according to their primary job functions.

**Disclosure:** We may disclose and/or share your health information with other health care professionals who provide treatment and/or service to you. These professionals will have a privacy and confidentiality policy like this one. Health information about you may also be disclosed to your family, friends, and and/or other persons you choose to involve in your case, only if you agree that we may do so.

**Payment:** We may use and disclose your health information to seek payment for services we provide to you. This disclosure involves our business office staff and may include insurance organizations or other businesses that become involved in the process of billing insurance claims, mailing statements and/or collecting balances.

**Emergencies:** We may use and disclose your health information to notify, or assist in the notification of a family member or anyone responsible for your care, in case of any emergency involving your care, your location, your general condition or death. If at all possible we will provide you with an opportunity to object to this use or disclosure.

Under emergency conditions or if you are incapacitated we will use our professional judgment to disclose only that information directly relevant to your care.

**Healthcare Operations:** We will use and disclose your health information to keep our practice operable. Examples of personnel who may have access to this information include, but are not limited to our administrative staff, outside health or management reviewers and individuals performing similar activities.

**Required by Law:** We may use and disclose your health information when we are required to do so by law. (Court or administrative orders, subpoena, discovery request or other lawful process.) We may disclose and/or share your health information when requested by national security, intelligence and other State and Federal officials and/or if you are an inmate or otherwise under custody of law enforcement.

**Abuse or Neglect:** We may disclose your health information to appropriate authorities if we reasonably believe that you are a possible victim or abuse, neglect, or domestic violence or the possible victim of other crimes. This information will be disclosed only to the extent necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health or safety or that of others.

**Public Health Responsibilities:** We will disclose your health information to report problems with products, reactions to medications, product recalls, disease/infection exposure and to prevent and control disease, injury and/or disability.

**Marketing Health-Related Services:** We will not disclose and/or share your health information for marketing purposes unless we have written authorization to do so.

**National Security:** The health information of Armed Forces personnel may be disclosed to military authorities under certain circumstances. If the information is required for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence or other national security activities, we may disclose it to authorized federal officials.

**Communication and Appointment Reminders:** We may use and disclose your health information to provide you with communication, statements and appointment reminders, including but not limited to emails, voicemail messages, text messages, postcards, or letter.

## **YOUR PRIVACY RIGHTS AS OUR PATIENT**

**Access:** Upon written request, you have the right to inspect and get copies of your health information (and that of an individual for whom you are a legal guardian.) There will be some limited exceptions. If you wish to examine your health information, you will need to complete and submit an appropriate request form. Contact our Privacy Officer for a copy of the Request Form. You may also request access by sending us a letter to the address at the end of this Notice. Once approved, an appointment can be made to review your records. Copies, if requested, will be \$25.00. If you want the copies mailed

to you, postage will also be charged. If you prefer a summary or an explanation of your health information, we will provide it for a fee. Please contact our office for an explanation of our fee structure.

**Amendment:** You have the right to amend your healthcare information, if you feel it is inaccurate or incomplete. Your request must be made in writing and must include an explanation of why the information should be amended. Under certain circumstances, your request may be denied.

**Non-routine Disclosures:** You have the right to receive a list of non-routine disclosures we have made of your health care information. (When we make routine disclosure of your information to a professional for treatment and/or payment purposes, we do not keep a record of routine disclosures: therefore these are not available.) You have the right to a list of instances in which we, or our business associates, disclosed information for other than treatment, payment or healthcare operations. You can request non-routine disclosures for periods dating back 6 years.

**Restrictions:** You have the right to request that we place additional restrictions on our use or disclosure of your health information. We do not have to agree to these additional restrictions, but if we do, we will abide by our agreement. (Except in emergencies.) Please contact our Privacy Officer if you want to further restrict access to your health care information. This request must be submitted in writing.

#### **QUESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS:**

You have the right to file a complaint with us if you feel we have not complied with our Privacy Policies. Your complaint should be directed to our Privacy Officer. If you feel we may have violated your privacy rights, or if you disagree with a decision we made regarding access to your health information, you can write a letter to our Privacy Officer.

#### **HOW TO CONTACT US:**

Privacy Officer:  
Margaret Harvey, M.S., LPC  
7520 Gardner Park Drive  
Gainesville, VA 20155  
571-248-2358