

Notice of Privacy Practices for Protected Health Information

Effective: April 3, 2023

For your information, the HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996) Privacy Rule gives individuals a fundamental right to be informed of the privacy practices of their health care providers, as well as to be informed of their privacy rights with respect to their personal health information. Covered healthcare providers are required to develop and distribute a notice that provides a clear explanation of these rights and 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 THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY.

YOUR RIGHTS

When it comes to your health information, you have certain rights. This section explains your rights and some of our responsibilities to help you.

Get an electronic or paper copy of your medical record.

- You can ask to see or get an electronic or paper copy of your medical record and other health information we have about you. Ask us how to do this. Certain limitations, such as access to psychotherapy notes, may apply.
- We will provide a copy or a summary of your health information, usually within 30 days of your request. We may charge a reasonable, cost-based fee.

Ask us to correct your medical record.

- You can ask us to correct health information about you that you think is incorrect or incomplete. Ask us how to do this.
- We may say “no” to your request, but we’ll tell you why in writing within 60 days.

Request confidential communications.

- You can ask us to contact you in a specific way (for example, home or office phone) or to send mail to a different address.
- We will say “yes” to all reasonable requests.

Ask us to limit what we use or share.

- You can ask us not to use or share certain health information for treatment, payment, or our operations. We are not required to agree to your request, and we may say “no” if it would affect your care.
- If you pay for a service or health care item out-of-pocket in full, you can ask us not to share that information for the purpose of payment or our operations with your health insurer. We will say “yes” unless a law requires us to share that information.

Get a list of those with whom we’ve shared information.

- You can ask for a list (accounting) of the times we’ve shared your health information for six years prior to the date you ask, who we shared it with, and why.
- We will include all the disclosures except for those about treatment, payment, and health care operations, and certain other disclosures (such as any you asked us to make). We’ll provide one accounting a year for free but will charge a reasonable, cost-based fee if you ask for another one within 12 months.

Get a copy of this Notice of Privacy Practices.

- You can ask for a paper copy of this notice at any time, even if you have agreed to receive the notice electronically. We will provide you with a paper copy promptly.

Choose someone to act for you.

- If you have given someone medical power of attorney or if someone is your legal guardian, that person can exercise your right and make choices about your health information.
- We will make sure the person has this authority and can act for you before we take any action.

File a complaint if you feel your rights are violated.

- You can complain if you feel we have violated your rights by contacting us using the information on page 5.
- You can file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights by sending a letter to 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201, calling 1-877-696-6775, or visiting www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/complaints/
- We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

YOUR CHOICES

For certain health information, you can tell us your choices about what we share. If you have a clear preference for how we share your information in the situations described below, talk to us. Tell us what you want us to do, and we will follow your instructions.

In these cases, you have both the right and choice to tell us to:

- Share information with your family, close friends, or others involved in your care.
- Share information in a disaster relief situation.

If you are not able to tell us your preference, for example if you are too ill and unable to communicate, we may go ahead and share your information if we believe it is in your best interest. We may also share your information when needed to lessen a serious and imminent threat to health or safety.

We never share your information for:

- Marketing purposes.
- Sale of your information.
- Fundraising

In this case we never share your information unless you give us written permission:

- Most sharing of psychotherapy notes.

OTHER USES AND DISCLOSURES

How do we typically share your information?

We typically use or share your health information in the following ways:

Treat you.

We can use your health information and share it with other professionals who are treating you. Example: A doctor treating you for a psychiatric illness asks another doctor about your overall health condition.

Run our organization.

We can use and share your health information to run the hospital, improve your care, and contact you when necessary.

Example: We use health information about you to manage your treatment and services.

Bill for your services.

We can use and share your health information to bill and get payment from health plans and other entities.

Example: We give information about you to your health insurance plan so it will pay for your services.

How else can we use or share your health information?

We are allowed or required to share your information in other ways-usually ways that contribute to the public good, such as public health and research. We have to meet many conditions in the law before we can share your information for these purposes.

For more information see:

www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/consumers/index.html

Help with public health and safety issues.

We can share health information about you for certain situations such as:

- Preventing disease.
- Helping with product recalls.
- Reporting adverse reactions to medications.
- Reporting suspected abuse, neglect, or domestic violence.
- Preventing or reducing a serious threat to anyone’s health or safety.

Do research.

We can use or share your information for health research.

Comply with the law.

We will share information about you if state or federal law require it, including with the Department of Health and Human Services if it wants to see that we’re complying with federal privacy law.

Respond to organ and tissue donor requests.

We can share health information about you with organ procurement organizations.

Work with a medical examiner or funeral director.

We can share health information with a coroner, medical examiner, or funeral director when an individual dies.

Address workers’ compensation, law enforcement, and other governmental requests.

We can use or share health information about you:

- For workers’ compensation claims.
- For law enforcement purposes or with a law enforcement official.
- With health oversight agencies for activities authorized by law.
- For special government functions such as military, national security, and presidential protective services.

Respond to lawsuits and legal actions.

We can share health information about you in response to a court or administrative order.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

- We are required by law to maintain the privacy and security of your protected health information.
- We will let you know promptly if a breach occurs that may have compromised the privacy or security of your information.
- We must follow the duties and privacy practices described in this Notice and give you a copy of it.
- We will not use or share your information other than as described here unless you tell us we can in writing. If you tell us we can, you may change your mind at any time. Let us know in writing if you change your mind.

For more information see:

www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/consumers/noticepp.html

Compliance with Certain State Laws

- When we use or disclose your health information as described in this Notice, or when you exercise certain of your rights set forth in this Notice, we may apply state laws about the confidentiality of health information in place of federal privacy regulations. We do this when these state laws provide you with greater rights or protection for your health information.

Example: Some state laws dealing with mental health records may require your express consent before your health information could be disclosed in response to a subpoena.
- When state laws are not in conflict or if these laws do not offer you better rights or more protection, we will continue to protect your privacy by applying the federal regulations.

Changes to the terms of this Notice.

We can change the terms of this Notice, and the changes will apply to all information we have about you. The new notice will be available upon request, in our office, and on our web site.

Contact

Information: Privacy Officer
Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute
2501 North Third Street
Harrisburg, PA 17110
(717) 782-6496



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