

## **NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES (Office of Dr. Carolyn W. Quist)**

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

The Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA") is a federal program that requires that all medical records and other individually identifiable health information used or disclosed by us in any form, whether electronically, on paper, or orally, are kept properly confidential. This Act gives you, the patient, significant new right to understand and control how your health information is used. "HIPAA" provides penalties for covered entities that misuse personal health information. We may use and disclose your medical records only for each of the following purposes: treatment, payment and healthcare operations.

- **Treatment** means providing, coordination, or managing health care and related services by one or more health care providers. An example of this would include a physical examination. We will also publish your lab and x-ray results on our secure website that requires a user password that only you will have access to.
- **Payment** means such activities as obtaining reimbursement for services, confirming coverage, billing or collection activities, and utilization review. An example of this would be sending a bill for your visit to your insurance company for payment.
- **Health Care Operations** include the business aspects of running our practice, such as conducting quality assessment and improvement activities, auditing functions, cost-management analysis, and customer service. An example would be an internal quality assessment review. We may also create and distribute de-identified health information by removing all reference to individually identifiable information.
- The practice may also be required or permitted to disclose your PHI for law enforcement and other legitimate reasons. In all situations, we shall do our best to assure its continued confidentiality to the extent possible.

We will contact you by phone or email to provide appointment reminders or information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you and will leave non-specific messages on answering machines if not available in person. Any other uses and disclosures of your PHI will be made only with your written authorization. You may revoke such authorization in writing and we are required to honor and abide by that written request, except to the extent that we have already taken actions relying on your authorization. You can exercise these rights by presenting a written request to the Privacy Officer, Kim Adams, Office Manager, and receive approval by Dr. Quist:

- The right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of protected health information, including those related to disclosures to family members, other relatives, close personal friends, or any other person identified by you. We are, however, not required to agree to a requested restriction. If we do agree to a restriction, we must abide by it unless you agree in writing to remove it.
- The right to reasonable requests to receive confidential communications of protected health information from us by alternative means or at alternative locations, including e-messages on our secure website.
- The right to inspect and copy your protected health information.
- The right to amend your protected health information.
- The right to receive an accounting of disclosures of protected health information.
- The right to obtain a paper copy of this notice from us upon request.
- The right to be advised of your unprotected PHI is intentionally or unintentionally disclosed.

If you have paid for services "out of pocket," in full and in advance, and you request that we not disclose PHI related solely to those services to a health plan, we will accommodate your request, except where we are required by law to make a disclosure.

We are required by law to maintain the privacy of your protected health information and to provide you with notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to protected health information. This notice is effective as of September 17, 2013 and we are required to abide by the terms of this Notice of Privacy Practices currently in effect. We reserve the right to change the terms of our Notice of Privacy Practices as required by law. We will post and you may request a written copy of a revised Notice of Privacy Practices from this office.

You have the right to file a written complaint with our office, or with the Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Civil Rights, about violations of the provisions of this notice or the policies and procedures of our office. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

Feel free to contact the Practice Compliance Officer, Kim Adams for more information by phone at 817-926-1313, in person or in writing.