

POEHAIOS, DUPONT & ASSOCIATES, PLC

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

As Required by the Privacy Regulations Created as a Result of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)

PLEASE REVIEW THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY.

A. OUR COMMITMENT TO YOUR PRIVACY

Our practice is dedicated to maintaining the privacy of your individually identifiable health information (IIHI). In conducting our business, we will create records regarding you and the treatment and services we provide to you. We are required by law to maintain the confidentiality of health information that identifies you. We also are required by law to provide you with this notice of our legal duties and the privacy practices that we maintain in our practice concerning your IIHI.

The terms of this notice apply to all records containing your IIHI that are created or retained by our practice. We reserve the right to revise or amend this Notice of Privacy Practices. Any revision or amendment to this notice will be effective for all of your records that our practice has created or maintained in the past, and for any of your records that we may create or maintain in the future. Our practice will post a copy of our current Notice in our offices in a visible location at all times, and you may request a copy of our most current Notice at any time.

B. WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE YOUR INDIVIDUALLY IDENTIFIABLE HEALTH INFORMATION (IIHI) IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS

The following categories describe the different ways in which we may use and disclose your IIHI.

1. Treatment. Our practice may use your IIHI to treat you. For example, we may ask you to have laboratory tests (such as blood or urine tests), and we may use the results to help us reach a diagnosis. We might use your IIHI in order to write a prescription for you, or we might disclose your IIHI to a pharmacy when we order a prescription for you. Many of the people who work for our practice – including, but not limited to, our clinicians and administrative staff – may use or disclose your IIHI in order to treat you or to assist others in your treatment. Additionally, we may disclose your IIHI to others who may assist in your care, such as your spouse, children or parents. Finally, we may also disclose your IIHI to other health care providers for purposes related to your treatment.

2. Payment. Our practice may use and disclose your IIHI in order to bill and collect payment for the services and items you receive from us. For example, we may contact your health insurer to certify that you are eligible for benefits (and for what range of benefits), and we may provide your insurer with details regarding your treatment to determine if your insurer will cover, or pay for, your treatment. We also may use and disclose your IIHI to obtain payment from third parties that may be responsible for such costs, such as family members. Also, we may use your IIHI to bill you directly for services and items. We may disclose your IIHI to other health care providers and entities to assist in their billing and collection efforts.

3. Health Care Operations. Our practice may use and disclose your IIHI to operate our business. As examples of the ways in which we may use and disclose your information for our operations, our practice may use your IIHI to evaluate the quality of care you received from us, or to conduct cost-management and business planning activities for our practice.

4. Disclosures Required By Law. Our practice will use and disclose your IIHI when we are required to do so by federal, state or local law.

C. YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING YOUR IIHI

You have the following rights regarding the IIHI that we maintain about you:

- 1. Confidential Communications.** You have the right to request that our practice communicate with you about your health and related issues in a particular manner or at a certain location. For instance, you may ask that we contact you at home, rather than work. In order to request a type of confidential communication, you must make a written request to the **compliance officer** specifying the requested method of contact, or the location where you wish to be contacted. Our practice will accommodate **reasonable** requests. You do not need to give a reason for your request.
- 2. Requesting Restrictions.** You have the right to request a restriction in our use or disclosure of your IIHI for treatment, payment or health care operations. Additionally, you have the right to request that we restrict our disclosure of your IIHI to only certain individuals involved in your care or the payment for your care, such as family members and friends. **We are not required to agree to your request.** In order to request a restriction in our use or disclosure of your IIHI, you must make your request in writing to **the compliance officer**. Note: This is a broader definition than provided for by mental health confidentiality, and mental health confidentiality standards will be adhered to in the practice.
- 3. Inspection and Copies.** You have the right to inspect and obtain a copy of the IIHI that may be used to make decisions about you, including patient medical records and billing records, **but not including psychotherapy notes**. You must submit your request in writing to **the compliance officer** in order to inspect and/or obtain a copy of your IIHI.
- 4. Amendment.** You may ask us to amend your health information if you believe it is incorrect or incomplete, and you may request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by or for our practice. To request an amendment, your request must be made in writing and submitted to **the compliance officer**.
- 5. Accounting of Disclosures.** All of our patients have the right to request an “accounting of disclosures.” An “accounting of disclosures” is a list of certain non-routine disclosures our practice has made of your IIHI for non-treatment or operations purposes. Use of your IIHI as part of the routine patient care in our practice is not required to be documented. In order to obtain an accounting of disclosures, you must submit your request in writing to **the compliance officer**. Note: This is not done at our practice and would only be done with your permission.
- 6. Right to a Paper Copy of This Notice.** You can obtain a copy of this notice by asking the office staff.
- 7. Right to File a Complaint.** If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with our practice or with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. To file a complaint with our practice, contact **the compliance officer**. All complaints must be submitted in writing. **You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.**
- 8. Right to Provide an Authorization for Other Uses and Disclosures.** Our practice will obtain your written authorization for uses and disclosures that are not identified by this notice or permitted by applicable law.

Again, if you have any questions regarding this notice or our health information privacy policies, please contact **the compliance officer**.