

WOODLANDS FAMILY & COMMUNITY MEDICINE

NOTICE OF PRIVACY 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 It carefully.

You have the right to obtain a paper copy of this Notice upon request

Patient Health Information

Under federal law, your patient health information is protected and confidential. Patient health information includes information about your symptoms, test results, diagnosis, treatment, and related medical information. Your health information also includes payment, billing, and insurance information.

How We Use Your Patient Health Information

We use health information about you for treatment, to obtain payment, and for healthcare operations, including administrative purposes and evaluation of the quality of care that you receive. Under some circumstances we may be required to use or disclose the information even without your permission.

Examples of Treatment, Payment and Healthcare Operations

Treatment: We will use and disclose your health information to provide you with medical treatment or services. For example, nurses, physicians, and other members of your treatment team will record information in your record and use it to determine the most appropriate course of care. We may also disclose the information to other healthcare providers who are participating in your treatment, to pharmacists who are filling your prescriptions, and to family members who are helping with your care.

Payment: We will use and disclose your health information for payment purposes. For example, we may need to obtain authorization from your insurance company before providing certain types of treatment. We will submit bills and maintain records of payment from your health plan.

Health Care Operations: We will use and disclose your health information to conduct our standard internal operations, including proper administration of records, evaluation of the quality of treatment, and to assess the care and outcomes of your case and others like it.

Special Uses

We may use your information to contact you with appointment reminders. We may also contact you to provide information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

Other Uses and Disclosures

We may use or disclose identifiable health information about you for other reasons, even without your consent. Subjective certain requirements, we are permitted to give out health information without your permission for the following purposes:

- *Required by law:* We may be required by law to report gunshot wounds, suspected abuse or neglect, or similar injuries and events.
- *Public health activities:* As required by law, we may disclose vital statistics, diseases, information related to recalls of dangerous products, and similar information to public health authorities.
- *Health oversight:* We may be required to disclose information to assist in investigations and audits, eligibility for government programs, and similar activities.
- *Judicial and administrative proceedings:* We may disclose information in response to an appropriate subpoena or court order.

(continued on reverse)

- *Law-enforcement purposes:* Subject to certain restrictions, we may disclose information required by law enforcement officials.
- *Deaths:* We may report information regarding deaths to coroners, medical examiners, funeral directors, and organ donation agencies.
- *Serious threat to health for safety:* We may use and disclose information when necessary to prevent serious threat to your health and safety or to the health and safety of the public or another person.
- *Military and Special Government Functions:* If you are a member of the Armed Forces, we may release information as required by military command authorities. We may also disclose information to correctional institutions or for national security purposes.
- *Research:* We may use or disclose information for approved medical research.
- *Worker's Compensation:* We may release information about you for Worker's Compensation or similar programs providing benefits for work-related injuries or illness.

In any other situation, we will ask for your written authorization before using or disclosing any identifiable health information about you. If you choose to sign an authorization to disclose information, you can later revoke that authorization to stop any future uses and disclosures.

Individual Rights

You have the following rights with regard to your health information. Please contact the person listed below to obtain the appropriate form for exercising these rights.

Request Restrictions: You may request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of your health information. We are not required to agree to such restrictions, but if we do agree, we must abide by those restrictions.

Confidential communications: You may ask us to communicate with you confidentially by, for example, sending notices to a special address or not using postcards to remind you of appointments.

Inspect and obtain copies: In most cases, you have the right to look at or get a copy of your records. There may be a small charge for the copies.

Amend Information: If you believe that information in your record is incorrect, or if important information is missing, you have the right to request that we correct the existing information or at the missing information.

Accounting of Disclosures: You may request a list of instances where we have disclosed health information about you for reasons other than treatment, payment, or healthcare operations.

Our Legal Duty

We are required by law to protect and maintain the privacy of your health information, to provide this Notice about our legal duties and privacy practices regarding protected health information, and to abide by the terms of the Notice currently in effect.

Changes in Privacy Practices

We may change our policies at any time. Before we make a significant change in our policies, we will change our Notice and post the new Notice on our website, in the waiting area and each examination room. You can also request a copy of our Notice at any time. For more information about our privacy practices, contact the person listed below.

Complaints

If you are concerned that we have violated your privacy rights, or if you disagree with a decision we made about your records, you may contact the person listed below. You may also send a written complaint to the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. The person listed below will provide you with the appropriate address upon request. You will not be penalized in any way for filing a complaint.

Contact Person

If you have any questions, requests, or complaints, please contact:

Beverly Freeman
17521 St. Luke's Way, Suite 190
The Woodlands, TX. 77384
(936) 447-9483

Effective Date: The effective date at this notice is October 1, 2016.