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NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

OUR LEGAL DUTY

We are required by applicable federal and state law to maintain the privacy of your health information. We are also required to give you this notice about our privacy act, our legal duties, and your rights concerning your health information. We must follow the privacy practices that are described in this notice while it is effect. This notice takes effect 04/14/2003.

We reserve the right to change our privacy practices and the terms of this notice at any time, provided such changes are permitted by applicable law. We reserve the right to make the changes in our privacy practices and the new terms of our notice effective for all health information we maintain, including health information we created or received before we made the changes. Before we make a significant change in our privacy practices, we will change this notice and make the new notice available upon request.

You may request a copy of our notice at any time. For more information about our privacy practices, or for additional copies of this notice, please contact us using the information listed at the end of the notice.

USES & DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION

We use and disclose health information about you for treatment, payment and healthcare operations.

For Example:

Treatment: We may use or disclose your health information to a physician or other healthcare provider providing treatment to you.

Payment: We may use and disclose you health information to obtain payment we provide to you.

Healthcare Options: We may use and disclose your health information in connection with our healthcare operations.

Healthcare operations include quality assessment and improvement activities, reviewing the competence or qualification of healthcare professionals, evaluating practitioner and provider performance, conducting training programs, accreditation, certification, licensing or credentialing activities.

Your Authorization: In addition to our use of your health information for treatment, payment or healthcare operations, you may give us written authorization to use your health information or to disclose it to anyone for any purpose. If you give us an authorization, you may revoke it in writing at any time. Your revocation will not affect any use or disclosures permitted by your authorization while it was in effect. Unless you give us written authorization, we cannot use or disclose your health information for any reason except those described in the notice.

TO YOUR FAMILY & FRIENDS: We must disclose your health information to you as described in the Patient Rights section of this notice. We may disclose your health information to a family member, friend or other person to the extent necessary to help with your healthcare or with payment of your healthcare, but only if you agree that we may do so.

PERSON INVOLVED IN CARE: We may disclose health information to notify, or assist in the notification of (including identifying or locating) a family member your personal representative or another responsible for your care, of your location, your general condition, or death. If you are present, then prior to use or disclosure of your health information, we will provide you with an opportunity to object such uses or disclosures. In the event of your incapacity or emergency circumstances, we will disclose health information based on a determination using our professional judgment disclosing only health information experience with common practice to make reasonable inferences of your best interest in allowing a person to pick up filled prescriptions, medical supplies, x-rays, or other similar forms of health information.

MARKETING HEALTH-RELATED SERVICES: We will not use your health information for marketing communications without your written authorization.

REQUIRED BY LAW: We may use or disclose your health information when we are required to do so by law.

ABUSE OR NEGLECT: We may disclose your health information to appropriate authorities if we reasonably believe that you are a possible victim abuse, neglect or domestic violence or the possible victim of other crimes. We may disclose your health information to the extent necessary to avert a serious threat to your safety or the health or safety of others.

NATIONAL SECURITY: We may disclose to military authorities the health information of Armed Forces personnel under certain circumstances. We may disclose to authorize federal officials health information required for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence and other national security activities. We may disclose having lawful custody of protected health information of inmate or patient under certain circumstances.

APPOINTMENT REMINDERS: We may use or disclose your health information to provide you with appointment reminders (such as voicemail, postcards or letters).

PATIENT RIGHTS

Access: You have the right to look at or get copies of your health information, with limited exceptions. You may request that we provide copies in format other than photocopies. We will use the format your request unless we cannot practicably do so. (You must make a request in writing to obtain access to your health information. You may obtain a form to request access by using the contact information listed at the end of this notice. We will charge you a reasonable cost-based fee for expenses such as copies and staff time. You may also request access by sending us a letter to the address at the end of this notice. If you request copies, we will charge you \$5.00 for each page, \$0 per hour for staff time to locate and copy your health information, and postage if you want the copies mailed to you. Of you request an alternate format; we will charge a cost-based fee for providing your health information in that format. If you prefer, we will prepare a summary or an explanation of your health information for a fee.

Disclosure Accounting: You have the right to receive a list of instances in which we or our business associate disclosed your health information for purposes, other than treatment, payment, healthcare operations and certain other activities, for the last 6 years, but not before April 14, 2003. If you request this accounting more than once in a 12-month period, we may charge you a reasonable, cost-based fee for responding to these additional request.

Restriction: You have the right to request that we place additional restrictions on our use and disclosure of your health information. We are not required to agree to these additional restrictions, but if we do, we will abide by our agreement (except in an emergency).

Amendment: You have the right to request that we amend your health information. (Your request must be in writing, and it must explain why the information should be amended.) We may deny your request under certain circumstances.

QUESTIONS & COMPLAINTS

If you are concerned that we may have violated your privacy rights, or you disagree with a decision we made about access to your health information or in response to a request you made to amend or restrict the use or disclosure of your health information or to have us communicate with you by alternative means or at alternate locations, you may complain to us using the contact information listed at the end of this notice. You also may submit a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We will provide you with the address to file your complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services upon request.

We support your right to the privacy of your health information. We will not retaliate in anyway if you choose to file a complaint with us or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Contact: HIPPA Compliance Officer
Phone: (910)791-0986
Fax: (910)791-2902
Address: 5653 Carolina Beach Rd. Suite C1
Wilmington NC 28412