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NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

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

**PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.
THE PRIVACY OF YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION IS IMPORTANT TO US.**

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 practices; 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 in effect. This Notice takes effect 4-14-2003, and will remain in effect until we replace or change it. 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 this Notice.

USES AND 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 your health information to obtain payment for services and confirming coverage.

HEALTHCARE OPERATIONS: 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 qualifications of healthcare professionals, evaluating practitioner and providing performance, conducting training programs, accreditation, certification, licensing or credentialing activities.

YOUR AUTHORIZATION: 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. Unless you give us a written authorization, we cannot use or disclose your health information for any reason except those described in this Notice.

TO YOU OR YOUR PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE: 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 for your healthcare, but only if you agree that we may do so.

PERSONS INVOLVED IN CARE: We may use or disclose health information to notify, or assist in the notification of a family member, your personal representative or another person 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 to 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 that is directly relevant to the person involved in your healthcare. We will also use our professional judgment and our 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.

DISASTER RELIEF: We may use or disclose your health information to assist in disaster relief efforts.

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 of 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 health or 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 authorized federal officials health information required for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence, and other national security activities. We may disclose to correctional institution or law enforcement official 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 messages, 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 a format other than photocopies. We will use the format you 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 \$0.25 for each page, \$20.00 per hour for staff time to locate and copy your health information, and postage if you want the copies mailed to you. If you request an alternative 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 explanation of your health information for a fee.

DISCLOSURE ACCOUNTING: You have the right to receive a list of insurances in which we or our business associates disclosed you 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 requests.

RESTRICTION: You have the right to request that we place additional restrictions on our use or 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.

ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION: You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your health information by alternative means or to alternative locations.

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.

ELECTRONIC NOTICE: You may receive a paper copy of this notice upon request, even if you have agreed to receive this notice electronically on our website or by electronic mail (e-mail).

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HIPAA PLEASE CONTACT:

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The Department of Health & Human Services
Office of Civil Rights
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201
Toll Free: 877/696-6775