

# John C. Cranham, D.D.S., P.C.

## 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 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 4/27/2010 and will remain in effect until we replace it.

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 that 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 anytime. For more information about our privacy practices, or for additional copies of this Notice, please contact 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. Discussion of the patient's treatment may be discussed at chair side or in our patient waiting area. Patients preferring the physician not discuss treatment in one of the disclosed areas may request a private consultation.

**Payment:** We may use or disclose your health information to obtain payment for services we provide to you.

**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 provider performance, conducting training programs, accreditation, certification, licensing or credentialing activities.

**To Your Family and 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 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 (including identifying or locating) 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 professional judgment disclosing only health information that is directly relevant to the person's involvement 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.

**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)

**Public Health Risks:** We may disclose health information about you for public health activities. These activities generally include the following: to prevent or control disease, injury or disability; to report child abuse or neglect; to notify a person who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk for contracting or spreading a disease or condition; to notify the appropriate government authority if we believe a patient has been the victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence.

**Health Oversight Activities:** We may disclose health information to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. These oversight activities include, for example, audits, investigations, inspections and licensure. These activities are necessary for the government to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil right laws.

**Lawsuits and Disputes:** If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose health information about you in response to a court or administrative order. We may also disclose health information about you in a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process by someone else involved in the dispute, but only if efforts have been made to tell you about the request or to obtain an order protecting the information requested.

**Law Enforcement:** We may release health information if asked to do so by a law enforcement official: in response to a court order, subpoena, warrant, summons or similar process; to identify or locate a suspect, fugitive, material witness, or missing person; about the victim of a crime if, under certain limited circumstances, we are unable to obtain the person's agreement; about criminal conduct at our office; and in emergency circumstances to report a crime, the location of the crime or victims, or the identity, description or location of the person who committed the crime.

**Pursuant to an Authorization:** We will require a signed authorization form before we disclose your health information to a third party for reasons other than those listed above. We will retain a copy of any signed authorization you give us that is attached to a request to us for your health information. We will also keep a record of when, to whom and what we provided in response to the request for disclosure. If you have signed an authorization for use to use or disclose your health information, and decide you want to revoke the authorization, you have the right to revoke it. You must revoke the specific authorization in writing and deliver it to the Privacy Officer at the address listed below before your revocation is effective. Once we receive the revocation, or have actual knowledge that you have revoked the authorization, we will make a note of it to assure that we do not make future disclosures pursuant to your original authorization.

## **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, \$15.00 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 an explanation of your health information for a fee. Contact us using the information listed at the end of this Notice for a full explanation of our fee structure.)

**Disclosure Accounting:** You have the right to receive a list of instances in which we or our business associates 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 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 (except in an emergency).

**Alternative Communication:** You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your health information by alternative means or to alternative locations. (You must make your request in writing) Your request must specify the alternative means or location, and provide satisfactory explanation how payments will be handled under the alternative means or location you request.

**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:** If you receive this Notice on our Web site or by electronic mail (email), you are entitled to receive this Notice in written form.

## **QUESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS**

If you want more information about our privacy practices or has questions or concerns, please contact us. 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 alternative locations, you may file a HIPAA complaint to us within 180 days of using the contact information listed at the end of this Notice. You may also submit a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services within 180 days. We will provide you with the address to file your complaint with 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 any way if you choose to file a complaint with us or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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