

# 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.

State and Federal laws require us to maintain the privacy of your health information and to inform you about our privacy practices by providing you with this Notice. We must follow the privacy practices as described below. This Notice will take effect on 04/14/03 and will remain in effect until it is amended or replaced by us.

It is our right to change our privacy practices provided law permits the changes. Before we make a significant change, this Notice will be amended to reflect the changes and we will make the new Notice available to you upon your next visit to the office. We reserve the right to make any changes in our privacy practices and the new terms of our Notice effective for all health information maintained, created and/or received by us before the date changes were made. This notice has been amended effective April 2010 and will remain in effect until it is amended or replaced by us.

You may request a copy of our Privacy Notice at any time by contacting our Privacy Officer. Information on contacting us can be found at the end of this Notice.

### **TYPICAL USES AND DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION**

We will keep your health information confidential, using it only for the following purposes:

**Treatment:** We may use your health information to provide you with our professional services. We have established "minimum necessary or need to know" standards that limit various staff members' access to your health information according to their primary job functions. Everyone on our staff is required to sign a confidentiality statement.

**Disclosure:** We may disclose and/or share your healthcare information with other health care professionals who provide treatment and/or service to you. These professionals will have a privacy and confidentiality policy like this one. Health information about you may also be disclosed to your family, friends and/or other persons you choose to involve in your care, only if you agree that we may do so.

**Communication with Family:** We may disclose to a family member, close personal friend or any other person you identify, health information relevant to that person's involvement in your care or payment related to your care.

**Payment:** We may use and disclose your health information to seek payment for services we provide to you. This disclosure involves our business office staff and may include insurance organizations or other businesses that may become involved in the process of mailing statements and/or collecting unpaid balances.

**Emergencies:** We may use or disclose your health information to notify, or assist in the notification of a family member or anyone responsible for your care, in case of any emergency involving your care, your location, your general condition or death. If at all possible we will provide you with an opportunity to object to this use or disclosure. Under emergency conditions or if you are incapacitated we will use our professional judgment to disclose only that information directly relevant to your care. We will also use our professional judgment to make reasonable inferences of your best interest by allowing someone to pick up filled prescriptions, x-rays or other similar forms of health information and/or supplies unless you have advised us otherwise.

**Healthcare Operations:** We may use and disclose your health information to keep our practice operable. Examples of personnel who may have access to this information include, but are not limited to, our medical records staff, outside health or management reviewers and individuals performing similar activities. We may share your health and personal information with our "business associates" who perform services for us. Our contracts with each of these business associates contain terms requiring them to protect the confidentiality of your health and personal information. We may also share your information with other health care providers, health care clearinghouses, or health plans that have a relationship with you when they request this information to assist them with their quality assessment and improvement activities, efforts to improve health or reduce health care costs, review of competence, qualifications, and performance of health care professionals, training programs, accreditation certification or licensing activities, or health care fraud and abuse detection and compliance efforts.

**Required by Law:** We may use or disclose your health information when we are required to do so by law. (Court or administrative orders, subpoena, discovery request or other lawful process.) We will use and disclose your information when requested by national security, intelligence and other State and Federal officials and/or if you are an inmate or otherwise under the custody of law enforcement.

**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. This information will be disclosed only to the extent necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health or safety or that of others.

**Public Health Responsibilities:** We will disclose your health care information to report problems with products, reactions to medications, product recalls, disease/infection exposure and to prevent and control disease, injury and/or disability.

**Marketing Health-Related Services:** We may contact you to give you information about products or services related to your treatment, case management or care coordination, or to direct or recommend other treatments or health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you, or to provide you with small gifts. We may encourage you to purchase a product or service

when we see you. We will not use your health information for marketing purposes unless we have your written authorization to do so.

**National Security:** The health information of Armed Forces personnel may be disclosed to military authorities under certain circumstances. If the information is required for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence or other national security activities, we may disclose it to authorized federal officials.

**Appointment Reminders:** We may use or disclose your health information to provide you with appointment reminders, including, but not limited to, voicemail messages, postcards or letters.

**Research:** We may contact you regarding new clinical trials for your diagnoses or health status based on screening of practice records. You would then have the choice to get further information and possibly participate or decline to participate in any such new trials. We may disclose your health information to researchers conducting research with respect to which your written authorization is not required, as approved by an Institutional Review Board or privacy board, in compliance with governing law. We may also disclose your health information to staff and business associates for the purpose of "de-identifying" your patient records. That means that information such as your name, telephone number, address, and other identifying information may be removed, coded, encrypted, or otherwise eliminated or concealed so that the health information is no longer identifiable to the person using it for research. We may also receive compensation for providing such de-identified data for research purposes.

## **YOUR PRIVACY RIGHTS AS OUR PATIENT**

**Access:** Upon written request, you have the right to inspect and get copies of your health information (and that of an individual for whom you are a legal guardian.) There will be some limited exceptions. If you wish to examine your health information, you will need to complete and submit an appropriate request form. Contact our Privacy Officer for a copy of the Request Form. You may also request access by sending us a letter to the address at the end of this Notice. Once approved, an appointment can be made to review your records. Copies, if requested, will be assessed reasonable charges not to exceed those set forth by the Louisiana Revised Statutes 40:1299.96 for each page copied. (\$1.00 per page for the first 25 pages, \$0.50 cents per page for pages 26-500 and \$0.25 per page thereafter. If you want the copies mailed to you, postage will also be charged. If you prefer a summary or an explanation of your health information, we will provide it for a fee. Please contact our Privacy Officer for a fee and/or for an explanation of our fee structure.

**Amendment:** You have the right to amend your healthcare information, if you feel it is inaccurate or incomplete. Your request must be in writing and must include an explanation of why the information should be amended. Under certain circumstances, your request may be denied.

**Non-routine Disclosures:** You have the right to receive a list of non-routine disclosures we have made of your health care information. (When we make a routine disclosure of your information to a professional for treatment and/or payment purposes, we do not keep a record of routine disclosures: therefore these are not available.) You have the right to a list of instances in which we, or our business associates, disclosed information for reasons *other than* treatment, payment or healthcare operations. You can request non-routine disclosures going back 6 years starting on April 14, 2003. Information prior to that date would not have to be released. (*Example: If you request information on May 15, 2004, the disclosure period would start on April 14, 2003 up to May 15, 2004. Disclosures prior to April 14, 2003 do not have to be made available.*)

**Restrictions:** You have the right to request that we place additional restrictions on our use or disclosure of your health information. Please contact our Privacy Officer if you want to further restrict access to your health care information. This request must be submitted in writing.

## **QUESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS**

You have the right to file a complaint with us if you feel we have not complied with our Privacy Policies. Your complaint should be directed to our Privacy Officer. If you feel we may have violated your privacy rights, or if you disagree with a decision we made regarding your access to your health information, you can complain to us in writing to request a Complaint Form from our Privacy Officer. We support your right to the privacy of your information and 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.

## **HOW TO CONTACT US**

Cancer Care of Louisiana

Attn: Privacy Officer

P.O. Box 56113

New Orleans, LA 70156-9989

504-679-9901; Fax: 504-679-9928

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES**

Notice to Patient:

We are required to provide you with a copy of our Notice of Privacy Practices, which states how we may use and/or disclose your health information. Please sign this form to acknowledge receipt of the Notice. You may refuse to sign this acknowledgement, if you wish.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this office's Notice of Privacy Practices.

*Please print your name here*

*Signature*

*Date*

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

We have made every effort to obtain written acknowledgment of receipt of our Notice of Privacy from this patient but it could not be obtained because:

- The patient refused to sign.
- Due to an emergency situation it was not possible to obtain an acknowledgement.
- We weren't able to communicate with the patient.
- Other *(Please provide specific details)*

*Employee signature*

*Date*