



*Your Journey to Wellness*

**NOTICE OF POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO PROTECT THE PRIVACY OF YOU (OR YOUR DEPENDENT'S) HEALTH INFORMATION FOR PSYCHIATRIC PROFESSIONALS OF GEORGIA**

**THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW PSYCHOLOGICAL AND MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU (OR YOUR DEPENDENT) MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED, AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION.**

**PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.**

**I. Uses and Disclosures for Treatment, Payment, and Health Care Operations:** I may use or disclose your protected health information (PHI) for treatment, payment, and health care operations purposes with your consent. To help clarify these terms, here are some definitions:

- “PHI” refers to information in your health record that could identify you.
- “Treatment” refers to when I provide, coordinate or manage your health care, and provide other services related to your health care. An example of treatment is when I consult with another health care provider, such as your family physician or another mental health professional.
- “Payment” is when I attempt to obtain reimbursement for your healthcare. An example specific to this practice is to submit your information to a collection agency for delinquent payments for services on your account.
- “Health Care Operations” are activities that relate to the performance and operation of my practice. Examples of health care operations are quality assessment and improvement activities; business related activities, such as audits and administrative services; and case management and care coordination activities.
- “Use” applies only to activities within my office such as sharing, utilizing, examining, and analyzing information that identifies you.
- “Disclosure” applies to activities outside of my office such as releasing, transferring, or providing access to information about you to other parties.

**II. Uses and Disclosures Requiring Authorization:** I may use or disclose PHI for purposes outside of treatment, payment, or health care operations when your appropriate authorization is obtained. An “authorization” is written permission above and beyond the general consent that permits only specific disclosures. In those instances when I am asked for information for purposes outside of treatment, payment, or health care operations, I will need to obtain an authorization from you before releasing this information. I will also need to obtain an authorization before releasing your Psychotherapy Notes. Psychotherapy Notes are notes I have made about our conversations during a private, group, joint, or family counseling session, which I have kept separate from the rest of your medical record. These notes are given a greater degree of protection than PHI. You may revoke all such authorizations (of PHI or Psychotherapy Notes) at any time, provided each revocation is in writing.

**III. Uses and Disclosures that does not Require Consent or Authorization:** I may use or disclose PHI without your consent or authorization in the following circumstances:

- **Child Abuse:** If I have reasonable cause to believe that a child is being abused, I must report that belief to the appropriate authority.
- **Adult and Domestic Abuse:** If I have reasonable cause to believe that a disabled adult or elder person has had a physical injury or injuries inflicted upon such disabled adult or elder person, other than by accidental means, or is being neglected or exploited, I must report that belief to the appropriate authorities.
- **Health Oversight Activities:** If I am the subject of an inquiry by the Georgia Composite Medical Board, I may be required to disclose protected health information regarding you in proceedings before the Board.



*Your Journey to Wellness*

- **Judicial and Administrative Proceedings:** If you are involved in a court proceeding and a request is made about the professional services I provided you or the records thereof, such information is privileged under state law, and I will not release information without your written consent or a court order. The privilege does not apply when you are being evaluated for a third party or where the evaluation is court ordered. You will be informed in advance if this is the case.
- **Serious Threat to Health or Safety:** If I determine, pursuant to the standards of my profession, should determine, that you present a serious danger of violence to yourself or another, I may disclose information in order to provide protection against such danger for you or the intended victim.
- **Workers Compensation:** I may disclose protected health information regarding you as authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with laws relating to worker's compensation or other similar programs, established by law, that provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness without regard to fault.

#### **IV. Patient's Rights and Psychiatrist's Duties**

##### **Patient's Rights:**

- **Right to Request Restrictions:** You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of protected health information. However, I am not required to agree to a restriction your request.
- **Right to Receive Confidential Communications by Alternative Means and at Alternative Locations:** You have the right to request and receive confidential communications of PHI by alternative means and at alternative locations. (For example, you may not want a family member to know that you are seeing me. On your request, I will send correspondence to another address.)
- **Right to Inspect and Copy:** You have the right to inspect or obtain a copy (or both) of PHI in my mental health and billing records used to make decisions about you for as long as the PHI is maintained in the record. I may deny your access to PHI under certain circumstances, but in some cases, you may have this decision reviewed. On your request, I will discuss with you the details of the request and denial process.
- **Right to Amend:** You have the right to request an amendment of PHI for as long as the PHI is maintained in the record. I may deny your request. On your request, I will discuss with you the details of the amendment process.
- **Right to an Accounting:** You generally have the right to receive an accounting of disclosures of PHI. On your request, I will discuss with you the details of the accounting process.
- **Right to a Paper Copy:** You have the right to obtain a paper copy of the notice from me upon request, even if you have agreed to receive the notice electronically.

##### **Psychiatrist's Duties:**

- I am required by law to maintain the privacy of PHI and to provide you with a notice of my legal duties and privacy practices with respect to PHI. I reserve the right to change the privacy policies and practices described in this notice. Unless I notify you of such changes, however, I am required to abide by the terms currently in effect. If I revise my policies and procedures, I will advise you of these changes by written notification.

**V. Complaints:** If you are concerned that I have violated your privacy rights, or you disagree with a decision I made about access to your records, you may send a written complaint to the Georgia Composite Medical Board or to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



*Your Journey to Wellness*

**VI. Effective Date:** This notice will go into effect on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017

Print Patient's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name of Parent/Legal Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature Patient or Parent/Legal Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Version: 8/1/2017  
Page 3 of 3*