

COMMUNITY CARE AND COUNSELING OF AIKEN

Community Care and Counseling Notice of Privacy Practices

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY

Community Care and Counseling's staff, practitioners and non-practitioners who provide services may use and /or share your health information for treatment, to obtain payment for treatment, for administrative purposes, to evaluate the quality of care that you receive and for any and all other purposes, to evaluate the quality of care that you receive and for any and all other purposes described in this notice.

Understanding Your Health Record/Information

A record is created each time you receive services from Community Care and Counseling of Aiken, a counselor associated with us. Typically, this record contains your symptoms, examinations, tests results, diagnoses, treatment and a plan for future care or treatment. This information, often referred to as your health or medical record, serves as a basis for planning your care and treatment. It is communicated among the many health professionals who contribute to your care and enables you or a third party payer to verify that services billed were actually provided. Your medical record is a legal document describing the care you received. It is a tool that we use to educate health professionals and to assist and continually work to improve the care we provide and the outcomes we achieve. Your medical record may be a source of data for medical research, public health initiatives and facility planning.

The purpose of this Notice of Privacy Practices is to assist you in understanding what is in your medical record and who, what, when, where and why others may access your health information. This document will assist you in making more informed decisions when authorizing disclosures of your health information.

Your Health Information Rights

Although your health record is the physical property of the healthcare practitioner or facility that compiled it, the information belongs to you. You have rights afforded to you by The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1966 (HIPPA), a federal regulation (42 CFR Part 164). These rights include:

- The right to request a restriction on certain uses and disclosure of your information. Community Care and Counseling (CCCA) is not required to agree to a requested restriction. Requests for Restrictions should be sent to CCCA.
- The right to obtain a paper copy of our Notice of Privacy Practices upon request. The Notice of Privacy Practices may be obtained from CCCA's registration area.
- The right to inspect and obtain a copy of your medical record. CCCA charges a fee for copying medical records in accordance with South Carolina law. Copies may be obtained by contacting CCCA.
- The right to amend or correct your medical record. However, CCCA is not required to agree to the requested amendment under certain circumstances. Request for amendments should be sent to CCCA.
- The right to obtain an accounting of certain disclosures of your health information. An accounting of disclosure can be obtained from the hospital's department of Health Information Management. We will provide you with one free accounting each year. For subsequent requests, we will charge a \$25 fee per request.

- The right to request communication of your health information by alternative means or at alternative locations. Requests for alternative communications should be made to CCCA.

Our Responsibilities

Community Care and Counseling of Aiken is required to:

- Maintain the privacy of your health information
- Provide you with a Notice of Privacy Practices describing our legal duties and practices with respect to information we collect and maintain about you.
- Abide by the terms of the Notice of Privacy Practices
- Notify you if we are unable to agree to a requested restriction
- Accommodate reasonable requests you may have to communicate health information by alternative means or at alternative locations

Community Care and Counseling of Aiken reserves the right to change our health information practices, policies and/or procedures at any time and to make the new provisions effective for all protected health information we maintain. You will be informed of such changes at the time of your next visit when you receive our Notice of Privacy Practices. The most recent version of our Notice of Privacy Practices will be posted.

We may use and disclose your health information for purposes of Treatment, Payment and Health Care Operations.

Treatment

For Example: Information obtained by your counselor will be recorded in your record and used to determine the course of your treatment.

Payment

For example: A bill may be sent to you and/or a third party payer. The information on or accompanying the bill may include information that identifies you, as well as your diagnosis, procedures and supplies used. This information will be used for billing, claims management and collection activities to obtain payment for services provided to you.

Health Care Operations

For example: Members of the staff may use your information to assess the care and outcomes in your case and others like it. This information then will be used in an effort to continually improve the quality and effectiveness of the healthcare and services we provide.

Other permitted or requires uses and Disclosures of your Health Information

Appointments: CCCA may call or send information to remind you of an upcoming appointment or to reschedule an appointment. When appropriate, a message will be left on your answering machine. The content of that message will be kept as generic as possible so as to protect your privacy.

Business Associates: There are some services provided in our organization through contracts with business associates. Examples include answering services, collection agencies, medical record storage companies and a copy service we use when making copies of the medical record. When these services are contracted, we may disclose your health information to our business associate so that they can perform their job and bill you or your third-party payer for services rendered. To protect your health information, however, we require the business associate to appropriately safeguard your information.

Communication with Family: Health professionals, using their best judgment, may disclose to a family member, other relative, close personal friend or any other person whom you identify, health information relevant to that person's involvement in your care or payment related to your care. Generally, we will provide you the opportunity to object to such disclosures; however, in certain circumstances, we may use and disclose your health information for these purposes without providing you the opportunity to object.

Coroner: We may disclose health information to coroners, consistent with applicable law, to carry out their duties.

Correctional Institution: If you are an inmate of a correctional institution, we may disclose to the institution or agents thereof health information necessary for your health and the health and safety of other individuals.

Directory: Unless you notify us that you object, we will use your name.....

Food and Drug Administration (FDA): We may disclose to the FDA health information relative to adverse events with respect to food, supplements, product and product defects, or post marketing surveillance information to enable product recalls, repairs or replacement.

Fund-raising: We may use your information to contact you to raise funds for the benefit of Palmetto Health.

Funeral Directors: We may disclose health information to funeral directors, consistent with applicable law, to carry out their duties.

Government Functions: Your health information may be disclosed for the purpose of protecting public officials, national security and intelligence activities and other specialized governments functions as necessary.

Marketing: We may use your information to contact you to provide information about treatment alternatives or other health related benefits and services that may be of interest to you. From time to time, your health care provider or designee may contact you to request your permission to participate in health education and/or promotion

Military and Veterans: If you are a member of the armed forces, we may release medical information about you as required by military command authorities. We may also release medical information about foreign military personnel to the appropriate foreign military authority.

Notification: WE may use or disclose information to notify or assist in notifying a family member, personal representative, or another person responsible for your care, and inform them of your location and general condition.

Organ Procurement Organization: Consistent with applicable law, we may disclose health information to organ procurement organizations or other entities engaged in the procurement, banking, or transplantation of organs for the purpose of tissue donation and transplant. This is to facilitate a patient or family's request to be an organ or tissue donor.

Post-Treatment Follow-up: CCCA may contact you to check on your health status or to ensure we have answered all of your questions. If you participate in post-treatment support groups, you may be given tools for your convenience that inform others of your diagnosis and/or treatment.

Public Health: As required by federal, state and local law, we may disclose your health information to public health or legal authorities charged with preventing, reporting or controlling disease, injury, disability or for other health oversight activities.

Required by Law or Law enforcement: CCCA may use and disclose information about you as required by law. Your information also may be used and disclosed for law enforcement purposes, as required by law or in response to a valid subpoena. For example, we may disclose information for the following purposes:

- For judicial and administrative proceedings pursuant to legal authority.
- To report information related to victims of abuse, neglect and/or domestic violence.
- To assist law enforcement officials in their law enforcement duties and
- For purposes of government investigations

Research: We may disclose information to researchers when their research has been approved by an Institution Review Board and/or Privacy Board that has reviewed the research proposal and established protocols to ensure the privacy of your health information.

Serious Threat to Health or Safety: To avert a serious threat to health or safety, we may use and disclose medical information about you when necessary. Any disclosure, however, would only, be to someone able to help prevent such a threat.

Telephone Contacts: We may contact you by telephone to provide you with test results, return your call, answer questions or obtain additional information.

Worker's Compensation: We may disclose health information to the extent authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with laws relating to Worker's Compensation or other similar programs established by law.

Other uses disclosures of your health information will be made only with your written authorization. You may revoke your authorization to use or disclose health information at any time except to the extent that action has already has been taken.

If you have any questions about Community Care and Counseling's health information policies or practices, you can contact CCC of Aiken at 803 641-9979

May 25, 2007