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NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

I. 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.

II. I HAVE A LEGAL DUTY TO SAFEGUARD YOUR PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION (PHI)

I am legally required to protect the privacy of your PHI, which includes information that can be used to identify you that I've created or received about your past, present or future health or condition, the provision of health care to you, or the payment of this health care. I must provide you with this Notice about my privacy practices, and such Notice must explain how, when, and why I will "use" and "disclose" your PHI. A "use" of PHI occurs when I share, examine, utilize, apply or analyze such information within my practice. PHI is "disclosed" when it is released, transferred, has been given to, or is otherwise divulged to a third party outside of my practice. With some exceptions, I may not use or disclose any more of your PHI than is necessary to accomplish the purpose for which the use or disclosure is made. And, I am legally required to follow the privacy practices described in this Notice.

However, I reserve the right to change the terms of this Notice and my privacy policies at any time. Any changes will apply to PHI on file with me already. Before I make any important changes to my policies, I will promptly change this Notice and post a new copy of it in my office. You can also request a copy of this Notice from me, or you can view a copy of it in my office.

III. HOW I MAY USE AND DISCLOSE YOUR PHI

I will use and disclose your PHI for different reasons. For some of these uses or disclosures, I need your prior authorization; for others, however, I do not. Listed below are the different categories of my uses and disclosures along with some examples.

A. Uses and Disclosures Relating to Treatment, Payment or Health Care Operations Do Not Require Your Prior Written Consent. I can use and disclose your PHI without your consent for the following reasons:

1. Treatment. I can disclose your PHI to physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists and other licensed health care practitioners who provide you with health care services or are involved in your care. For example, if you're being treated by a psychiatrist, I can disclose your PHI to your psychiatrist in order to coordinate your care.

2. Payment for treatment. I can use and disclose your PHI to bill and collect payment for the treatment and services provided by me to you. For example, I might send your PHI to your insurance company or health plan to be paid for the health care services that I have provided to you. I may also provide your PHI to my business associates, such as billing companies, claims processing companies and others that process my health care claims.

3. Health care operations. I can disclose your PHI to operate my practice. For example, I might use your PHI to evaluate the quality of health care services that you received or to evaluate the performance of the health care professionals who provided such services to you. I may also provide your PHI to my accountant, attorney, consultants and others to make sure I'm complying with applicable laws.

4. Notification and communication with your family. I can use your PHI to notify your family in emergency situations. For example, I may disclose information to your family members or others who can help you if you are ill or injured. In the event of a disaster, I may disclose information to a relief organization so they may coordinate notification efforts. If you are unable or unavailable to agree or object, I will use my clinical judgment in communication with your family or others.

5. Other disclosures. I may also disclose your PHI to others without your consent in certain situations. For example, your consent isn't required if you need emergency treatment as long as I try to get your consent after treatment is rendered, or if I try to get your consent but you are unable to communicate with me (for example, if you are unconscious or in severe pain) and I think that you would consent to such treatment if you were able to do so.

B. Certain Uses and Disclosures Do Not Require Your Consent. I can use and disclose your PHI without your consent or authorization for the following reasons:

1. When disclosure is required by federal, state or local law; judicial or administrative proceedings; or law enforcement. For example, I may make a disclosure to applicable officials when a law requires me to report information to government agencies and law enforcement personnel about victims of abuse or neglect, or when ordered in a judicial or administrative proceeding.

2. Public health activities. For example, I may have to report information about you to the county coroner.

3. Health oversight activities. For example, I may have to provide information to assist the government when it conducts an investigation or inspection of a health care provider or organization.

4. Research purposes. In certain circumstances, I may provide PHI in order to conduct medical research.

5. To avoid harm. I may use or disclose limited PHI about you when necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat to a person or the public's health or safety. If I reasonably believe you pose a serious threat of harm to yourself, I may contact family members or others who can help protect you. If you communicate a serious threat of bodily harm to another, I will be required to notify law enforcement and the potential victim.

6. Specific government functions. I may disclose PHI of military personnel and veterans in certain situations. I may disclose PHI for national security purposes, such as protecting the President of the United States or conducting intelligence operations.

7. Workers' compensation purposes. I may provide PHI in order to comply with workers' compensation laws.

8. Appointment reminders and health-related benefits or services. I may use PHI to provide appointment reminders or give you information about treatment alternatives, or other health care services or benefits I offer. I may leave this information on your answering machine, voicemail, or a message left with whoever answers the phone.

9. Closing of practice. In the event my psychotherapy practice is closed due to death, health or personal reasons, your PHI will become the property of the executor. You will maintain the right to request that copies of your PHI be transferred to another physician, therapist or health group.

C. Certain Uses and Disclosures Require You to Have the Opportunity to Object.

1. Disclosures to family, friends or others. I may provide your PHI to a family member, friend or other person that you indicate is involved in your care or the payment for your health care, unless you object in whole or in part. The opportunity to consent may be obtained retroactively in emergency situations.

D. Other Uses and Disclosures Require Your Prior Written Authorization. In any other situation not described in sections III A, B and C above, I will ask for your written authorization before using or disclosing any of your PHI. If you choose to sign an authorization to disclose your PHI, you can later revoke such authorization in writing to stop any future uses and disclosures (to the extent that I haven't taken any action in reliance on such authorization) of your PHI by me.

IV. WHAT RIGHTS YOU HAVE REGARDING YOUR PHI

You have the following rights with respect to your PHI:

A. The Right to Request Limits on Uses and Disclosures of Your PHI. You have the right to ask that I limit how I use and disclose your PHI. I will consider your request, but I am not legally required to accept it. If I accept your request, I will put any limits in writing and abide by them except in emergency situations. You may not limit the uses and disclosures that I am legally required or allowed to make.

B. The Right to Choose How I Send PHI to You. You have the right to ask that I send information to you at an alternate address (for example, sending information to your work address rather than your home address) or by alternate means (for example, e-mail instead of regular mail). I must agree to your request as long as I can easily provide the PHI to you in the format you requested.

C. The Right to See and Get Copies of Your PHI. In most cases, you have the right to look at or get copies of your PHI that I have, but you must make the request in writing. If I don't have your PHI but I know who does, I will tell you how to get it. I will respond to you but in certain situations, I may deny your request. If I do, I will explain your right to have my denial reviewed. If you are a parent or legal representative of a minor, please note that the records of a minor may not be available to you. For example, if I determine, in good faith, that access to the patient records requested would have a detrimental effect on my professional relationship with the minor patient or on the minor's physical safety or psychological well-being, or if the records pertain to health care services for which the minor can lawfully give consent, the records may not be available to the minor's parent or legal representative.

D. The Right to Get a List of the Disclosures I Have Made. You have the right to get a list of instances in which I have disclosed your PHI. The list will not include uses or disclosures that you have already consented to, such as those made for treatment, payment, or health care operations, directly to you or to your family. The list also won't include uses and disclosures made for national security purposes, to corrections or law enforcement personnel or disclosures made before April 15, 2003.

I will respond to your request for an accounting of disclosures within 60 days of receiving your request. The list I give you will include disclosures made in the last six years unless you request a shorter time. The list will include the date of the disclosure, to whom PHI was disclosed (including their address, if known), a description of the information disclosed, and the reason for the disclosure. I will provide the list to you at no charge, but if you make more than one request in the same year, I will charge you a reasonable cost-based fee for each additional request.

E. The Right to Correct or Update Your PHI. If you believe that there is a mistake in your PHI or that a piece of important information is missing, you have the right to request that I correct the existing information or add the missing information. You must provide the request and your reason for the request in writing. I will respond within 60 days of receiving your request to correct or update your PHI. I may deny your request in writing if the PHI is (i) correct and complete, (ii) not created by me, (iii) not allowed to be disclosed, or (iv) not part of my records. My written denial will state the reasons for the denial and explain your right to file a written statement of disagreement with the denial. If you don't file one, you have the right to request that your request and my denial be attached to all future disclosures of your PHI. If I approve your request, I will make the change to your PHI, tell you that I have done it, and tell others that need to know about the change to your PHI.

V. HOW TO COMPLAIN ABOUT MY PRIVACY PRACTICES

If you think that I may have violated your privacy rights, or you disagree with a decision I made about access to your PHI, you may file a complaint with the person listed in Section VI below. You also may send a written complaint to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services at 200 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20201. I will take no retaliatory action against you if you file a complaint about my privacy practices.

VI. PERSON TO CONTACT FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THIS NOTICE OR TO COMPLAIN ABOUT MY PRIVACY PRACTICES

If you have any questions about this notice or any complaints about my privacy practices, or would like to know how to file a complaint with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, please contact me at (916) 990 - 7733.

VII. EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS NOTICE

This notice went into effect on April 14, 2003.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE BEEN OFFERED A COPY OF THIS NOTICE. I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THIS NOTICE IS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW IN DR. HILLARY'S OFFICE.