

Sullivan County Memorial Hospital & Clinics

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.

If you have questions about this notice, please contact the Compliance Officer at 660-265-4212

This Notice of Privacy Practices is NOT an authorization. This Notice of Privacy Practices describes how Sullivan County Memorial Hospital and Clinics, our Business Associates and their subcontractors, may use and disclose your protected health information (PHI) to carry out treatment, payment or health care operations (TPO) and for other purposes that are permitted or required by law. It also describes your rights to access and control your protected health information. "Protected health information" is information about you, including demographic information, that may identify you and that relates to your past, present or future physical or mental health condition and related health care services.

USES AND DISCLOSURES OF PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION

Your protected health information may be used and disclosed by your physician, our office staff and others outside of our office that are involved in your care and treatment for the purpose of providing health care services to you, to pay your health care bills, to support the operation of the physician's practice, and any other use required by law. We are required by law to: 1) Make sure that medical information that identifies you is kept private; 2) Give you this notice of our legal duties and privacy practice with respect to medical information about you; and 3) Follow the terms of the notice that is currently in effect.

Treatment: We will use and disclose your protected health information to provide, coordinate, or manage your health care and any related services. This includes the coordination or management of your health care with a third party. For example, your protected health information may be provided to a physician to whom you have been referred, DME vendors, surgery centers/hospitals, referring physicians, family practitioner, physical therapists, home health providers, laboratories, worker comp adjusters and nurse case managers, etc. to ensure that the healthcare provider has the necessary information to diagnose or treat you.

Payment: Your protected health information will be used, as needed, to obtain payment for your health care services. For example, obtaining approval for a hospital stay, surgery, MRI or other diagnostic test, injection procedures, injection series, physical therapy, etc., may require that your relevant protected health information be disclosed to the health plan to obtain approval for the procedure.

Healthcare Operations: We may use or disclose, as-needed, your protected health information in order to support the business activities of SCMHC and your physician's practice. These activities include, but are not limited to, quality assessment, employee review, training of medical students, licensing, fundraising, and conducting or arranging for other business activities. For example, we may disclose your protected health information to medical school students that see patients at our office.

Sign-in Sheets: In addition, we may use a sign-in sheet at the registration desk where you will be asked to sign your name and indicate your physician. We may also call you by name in the waiting room when your physician is ready to see you.

Appointment Reminders: We may use or disclose your protected health information, as necessary, to contact you to remind you of your appointment, and inform you about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

Fundraising Activity: If we use or disclose your protected health information for fundraising activities, we will provide you the choice to opt out of those activities by notifying the Compliance Officer in writing. You may also choose to opt back in by using the same notification method.

Hospital Directory: We may include limited information about you in the hospital directory while you are an inpatient. Your religious affiliation may be given to a member of the clergy, even if they do not ask for you by name. This is so your family, friends and clergy can visit you in the hospital and generally know how you are doing.

Research: Under certain circumstances we may use and disclose medical information about you for research purposes. All research projects are subject to special approval processes.

As required by law: We may use or disclose your protected health information in the following situations without your authorization. These situations include: as required by law, public health issues as required by law, communicable diseases, health oversight, abuse or neglect, food and drug administration requirements, legal proceedings, law enforcement, coroners, funeral directors, organ donation, research, criminal activity, military activity and national security, workers' compensation, inmates, and other required uses and disclosures. Under the law, we must make disclosures to you upon your request. Under the law, we must also disclose your protected health information when required by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to investigate or determine our compliance with the requirements under Section 164.500.

USES AND DISCLOSURES THAT REQUIRE YOUR AUTHORIZATION

Other Permitted and Required Uses and Disclosures will be made **only with your consent, authorization** or opportunity to object unless required by law. Without your authorization, we are expressly prohibited to use or disclose your protected health information for marketing purposes. We may not sell your protected health information without your authorization. We may not use or disclose most psychotherapy notes contained in your protected health information. We will not use or disclose any of your protected health information that contains genetic information that will be used for underwriting purposes.

You may revoke the authorization, at any time, in writing, except to the extent that your physician or the physician's practice has taken an action in reliance on the use or disclosure indicated in the authorization.

YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

The following are statements of your rights with respect to your protected health information.

You have the right to inspect and copy your protected health information (fees may apply) – Pursuant to your written request, you have the right to inspect or copy your protected health information whether in paper or electronic format. Under federal law, however, you may not inspect or copy the following records: Psychotherapy notes, information compiled in reasonable anticipation of, or used in, a civil, criminal, or administrative action or proceeding, protected health information restricted by law, information that is related to medical research in which you have agreed to participate, information whose disclosure may result in harm or injury to you or to another person, or information that was obtained under a promise of confidentiality.

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You have the right to request a restriction of your protected health information – This means you may ask us not to use or disclose any part of your protected health information for the purposes of treatment, payment or healthcare operations. You may also request that any part of your protected health information not be disclosed to family members or friends who may be involved in your care or for notification purposes as described in this Notice of Privacy Practices. Your request must state the specific restriction requested and to whom you want the restriction to apply. Your physician is not required to agree to your requested restriction except if you request that the physician not to disclose protected health information to your health plan with respect to healthcare for which you have paid in full out of pocket.

You have the right to request to receive confidential communications – You have the right to request confidential communication from us by alternative means or at an alternative location. You have the right to obtain a paper copy of this notice from us, upon request, even if you have agreed to accept this notice alternatively i.e. electronically.

You have the right to request an amendment to your protected health information – If you feel that medical information we have about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information for as long as SCMH has the information stored. If we deny your request for amendment, you have the right to file a statement of disagreement with us in writing to the Compliance Office of SCMH including a statement that clearly supports your request. We will notify you of any cost involved prior to any cost being incurred. We may prepare a rebuttal to your statement and will provide you with a copy of any such rebuttal.

You have the right to receive an accounting of certain disclosures – You have the right to receive an accounting of disclosures, paper or electronic, except for disclosures: pursuant to an authorization, for purposes of treatment, payment, healthcare operations; required by law, that occurred prior to April 14, 2003, or six years prior to the date of the request. The 1st list you request in a 12 month period will be free. We may charge you for the cost of providing any additional lists.

You have the right to receive notice of a breach – We will notify you if your unsecured protected health information has been breached.

You have the right to obtain a paper copy of this notice from us even if you have agreed to receive the notice electronically. To obtain a paper copy of this notice, contact the Admissions Office of SCMH at 660-265-4212.

CHANGES TO THIS NOTICE

We reserve the right to change the terms of this notice and we will notify you of such changes on the following appointment. We will also make available copies of our new notice if you wish to obtain one. **A COPY OF THIS NOTICE WILL BE POSTED IN EACH SCMH FACILITY.**

COMPLAINTS

You may complain to us or to the Secretary of Health and Human Services if you believe your privacy rights have been violated by us. You may file a complaint with us by notifying our Compliance Officer of your complaint either in writing or by telephone. **We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.**

OTHER USES OF MEDICAL INFORMATION

Other uses and disclosures of medical information not covered by this notice or the laws that apply to us will be made only with your written permission. If you provided us permission to use or disclose medical information about you, you may revoke that permission in writing at any time. If you revoke your permission, we will no longer use or disclose medical information about you for the reasons covered by your written authorization. You understand that we are unable to take back any disclosures we have already made with your permission, and that we are required to retain our records of the care that we provided to you.

SCMH HIPAA COMPLIANCE OFFICER Phone: 660-265-4212

We are required by law to maintain the privacy of, and provide individuals with, this notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to protected health information. We are also required to abide by the terms of the notice currently in effect. If you have any questions in reference to this form, please ask to speak with our HIPAA Compliance Officer in person or by phone at our main phone number.

Please sign the accompanying “Acknowledgment” form. Please note that by signing the Acknowledgment form you are only acknowledging that you have received or been given the opportunity to receive a copy of our Notice of Privacy Practices.