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## 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.

Privacy is a very important concern for all those who come to this office. It is also complicated, because of the many federal and state laws and our professional ethics. Because the rules are so complicated, some parts of this notice are very detailed, and you probably will have to read them several times to understand them. If you have any questions, our privacy officer will be happy to help you understand our procedures and your rights. His or her name and address are at the end of this notice.

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### A. Introduction: To our clients

This notice will tell you how we handle your medical information. It tells how we use this information here in this office, how

we share it with other professionals and organizations, and how you can see it. We want you to know all of this so that you can make the best decisions for yourself and your family. If you have any questions or want to know more about anything in this notice, please ask our privacy officer for more explanations or more details.

## **B. What we mean by your medical information**

Each time you visit us or any doctor's office, hospital, clinic, or other health care provider, information is collected about you and your physical and mental health. It may be information about your past, present, or future health or conditions, or the tests and treatment you got from us or from others, or about payment for health care. The information we collect from you is called "PHI," which stands for "protected health information." This information goes into your **medical or health care records** in our office.

In this office, your PHI is likely to include these kinds of information:

- \_ Your history: Things that happened to you as a child; your school and work experiences; your marriage and other personal history.
- \_ Reasons you came for treatment: Your problems, complaints, symptoms, or needs.
- \_ Diagnoses: These are the medical terms for your problems or symptoms.
- \_ A treatment plan: This is a list of the treatments and other services that we think will best help you.
- \_ Progress notes: Each time you come in, we write down some things about how you are doing, what we notice about you, and what you tell us.
- \_ Records we get from others who treated you or evaluated you.
- \_ Psychological test scores, school records, and other reports.
- \_ Information about medications you took or are taking.
- \_ Legal matters.
- \_ Billing and insurance information

There may also be other kinds of information that go into your health care records here.

We use PHI for many purposes. For example, we may use it:

- \_ To plan your care and treatment.
- \_ To decide how well our treatments are working for you.
- \_ When we talk with other health care professionals who are also treating you, such as your family doctor or the professional who referred you to us.
- \_ To show that you actually received services from us, which we billed to you or to your health insurance company.
- \_ For teaching and training other health care professionals.
- \_ For medical or psychological research.
- \_ For public health officials trying to improve health care in this area of the country.
- \_ To improve the way we do our job by measuring the results of our work.

When you understand what is in your record and what it is used for, you can make better decisions about who, when, and why others should have this information.