

Accommodating Reasonable Requests for Confidential Communications

Purpose:

In keeping with patient rights established under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and this office's commitment to allowing patients an opportunity to control disclosures of their protected health information (PHI), we will accommodate all reasonable requests for confidential communications that we receive from our patients or their representatives.

Policy:

Notice of each patient's right to make reasonable requests for confidential disclosures is included in the *Notice of Privacy Practices* that is posted in our office and provided to all patients.

- This office recognizes the rights of any patient to request that we restrict the use or disclosures of their PHI to carry out treatment, payment, or healthcare operations.
- While we cannot necessarily agree to all requests, we will comply with any that are reasonable, and will honor those restrictions *unless* the patient is in need of emergency treatment and the restricted PHI is needed to provide the emergency treatment. If a disclosure is made pursuant to emergency treatment, we will request that the other provider not further use or disclose the information.
- Any agreed upon restriction will not prevent this office from complying with any disclosures required by federal or state law, or federal or state authorities. See *Mandatory Disclosures* policy and procedure for more detail.
- Any request to restrict disclosures can be terminated by the patient, if the revocation is in writing, or if he/she orally agrees to the termination that oral agreement is documented.
- This office will accommodate any reasonable request for communications from this office to be performed through alternative means or locations, e.g. alternative address, alternative phone number, all mail in closed envelopes, if the request is practicable, in writing, and does not deny this office appropriate contact for treatment, operations, and/or payment purposes.
- All patients will be notified in our *Notice of Privacy Practices* that it is our standard procedure to send appointment reminders in the mail and/or leave telephone answering machine messages, but that they have the right to request that we not do either if they make that request in writing.
- This office will not ever require an explanation from the patient as to the basis for the request that he/she is making.