

## NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

### Anderson & Hoffner Dental Center

**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.**

#### I. Dental Practice Covered by this Notice

This Notice describes the privacy practices of Anderson & Hoffner Dental Center. "We" and "our" means the Dental Practice. "You" and "your" means our patient.

#### Our Promise to You and Our Legal Obligations

The privacy of your health information is important to us. We understand that your health information is personal and we are committed to protecting it. This Notice describes how we may use and disclose your protected health information to carry out treatment, payment or health care operations 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 or condition and related health care services. Please feel free to discuss any questions with our staff.

We are required by law to:

- Maintain the privacy of your protected health information;
- Give you this Notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to that information; and
- Abide by the terms of our Notice that is currently in effect.

#### How We May Use or Disclose Your Health Information

The following examples describe different ways we may use or disclose your health information. These examples are not meant to be exhaustive. We are permitted by law to use and disclose your health information for the following purposes:

##### A. Common Uses and Disclosures

- 1. Treatment.** We may use your health information to provide you with dental treatment or services, such as cleaning or examining your teeth or performing dental procedures. We may disclose health information about you to dental specialists, physicians, or other health care professionals involved in your care.
- 2. Payment.** We may use and disclose your health information to obtain payment from health plans and insurers for the care that we provide to you.
- 3. Health Care Operations.** We may use and disclose health information about you in connection with health care operations necessary to run our practice, including review of our treatment and services, training, evaluating the performance of our staff and health care professionals, quality assurance, financial or billing audits, legal matters, and business planning and development.
- 4. Appointment Reminders.** We may use or disclose your health information when contacting you to remind you of a dental appointment. We may contact you by using a postcard, letter, phone call, voice message, text or email.
- 5. Treatment Alternatives and Health-Related Benefits and Services.** We may use and disclose your health information to tell you about treatment options or alternatives or health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.
- 6. Disclosure to Family Members and Friends.** We may disclose your health information to a family member or friend who is involved with your care or payment for your care if you do not object or, if you are not present, we believe it is in your best interest to do so.
- 7. Disclosure to Business Associates.** We may disclose your protected health information to our third-party service providers (called, "business associates") that perform functions on our behalf or provide us with services if the information is necessary for such functions or services. For example, we may use a business associate to assist us in maintaining our practice management software. All of our business associates are obligated, under contract with us, to protect the privacy of your information and are not allowed to use or disclose any information other than as specified in our contract.

**B. Less Common Uses and Disclosures- We are also permitted to use or disclose your health information without your written authorization for the following purposes: as required by law; for public health activities; health oversight activities; in cases of abuse or neglect; to comply with food and drug administration requirements; research purposes; legal proceedings; law enforcement purposes; coroners; funeral directors; organ donation; criminal activity; military activity; national security; worker's compensation; when an inmate in a correctional facility; and if requested by the Department of health and human services in order to investigate or determine our compliance with the requirements of the privacy rule.**

#### Your Written Authorization for Any Other Use or Disclosure of Your Health Information

Uses and disclosures of your protected health information that involve the release of psychotherapy notes (if any), marketing, sale of your protected health information, or other uses or disclosures not described in this notice will be made only with your written authorization, unless otherwise permitted or required by law. You may revoke this authorization at any time, in writing, except to the extent that this office has taken an action in reliance on the use of disclosure indicated in the authorization. If a use or disclosure of protected health information described above in this notice is prohibited or materially limited by other laws that apply to use, we intend to meet the requirements of the more stringent law.

#### VII. Your Rights with Respect to Your Health Information

You have the following rights with respect to certain health information that we have about you (information in a Designated Record Set as defined by HIPAA. To exercise any of these rights, you must submit a written request to our Privacy Official listed on the first page of this Notice.

#### **A. Right to Access and Review**

You may request to access and review a copy of your health information. We may deny your request under certain circumstances. You will receive written notice of a denial and can appeal it. We will provide a copy of your health information in a format you request if it is readily producible. If not readily producible, we will provide it in a hard copy format or other format that is mutually agreeable. If your health information is included in an Electronic Health Record, you have the right to obtain a copy of it in an electronic format and to direct us to send it to the person or entity you designate in an electronic format. We may charge a reasonable fee to cover our cost to provide you with copies of your health information.

#### **B. Right to Amend**

If you believe that your health information is incorrect or incomplete, you may request that we amend it. We may deny your request under certain circumstances. You will receive written notice of a denial and can file a statement of disagreement that will be included with your health information that you believe is incorrect or incomplete.

#### **C. Right to Restrict Use and Disclosure**

You may request that we restrict uses of your health information to carry out treatment, payment, or health care operations or to your family member or friend involved in your care or the payment for your care. We may not (and are not required to) agree to your requested restrictions, with one exception: If you pay out of your pocket in full for a service you receive from us and you request that we not submit the claim for this service to your health insurer or health plan for reimbursement, we must honor that request.

#### **D. Right to Confidential Communications, Alternative Means and Locations**

You may request to receive communications of health information by alternative means or at an alternative location. We will accommodate a request if it is reasonable and you indicate that communication by regular means could endanger you. When you submit a written request to the Privacy Official listed on the first page of this Notice, you need to provide an alternative method of contact or alternative address and indicate how payment for services will be handled.

#### **E. Right to an Accounting of Disclosures**

You have a right to receive an accounting of disclosures of your health information for the six (6) years prior to the date that the accounting is requested except for disclosures to carry out treatment, payment, health care operations (and certain other exceptions as provided by HIPAA). The first accounting we provide in any 12-month period will be without charge to you. We may charge a reasonable fee to cover the cost for each subsequent request for an accounting within the same 12-month period. We will notify you in advance of this fee and you may choose to modify or withdraw your request at that time.

#### **F. Right to a Paper Copy of this Notice**

You have the right to a paper copy of this Notice. You may ask us to give you a paper copy of the Notice at any time (even if you have agreed to receive the Notice electronically). To obtain a paper copy, ask the Privacy Official.

#### **G. Right to Receive Notification of a Security Breach**

We are required by law to notify you if the privacy or security of your health information has been breached. The notification will occur by first class mail within sixty (60) days of the event. A breach occurs when there has been an unauthorized use or disclosure under HIPAA that compromises the privacy or security of your health information.

The breach notification will contain the following information: (1) a brief description of what happened, including the date of the breach and the date of the discovery of the breach; (2) the steps you should take to protect yourself from potential harm resulting from the breach; and (3) a brief description of what we are doing to investigate the breach, mitigate losses, and to protect against further breaches.

#### **VIII. Special Protections for HIV, Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Mental Health and Genetic Information**

Certain federal and state laws may require special privacy protections that restrict the use and disclosure of certain health information, including HIV-related information, alcohol and substance abuse information, mental health information, and genetic information. For example, a health plan is not permitted to use or disclose genetic information for underwriting purposes. Some parts of this HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices may not apply to these types of information. If your treatment involves this information, you may contact our office for more information about these protections.

#### **IX. Our Right to Change Our Privacy Practices and This Notice**

We reserve the right to change the terms of this Notice at any time. Any change will apply to the health information we have about you or create or receive in the future. We will promptly revise the Notice when there is a material change to the uses or disclosures, individual's rights, our legal duties, or other privacy practices discussed in this Notice. We will post the revised Notice on our website (if applicable) and in our office and will provide a copy of it to you on request.

#### **X. How to Make Privacy Complaints**

If you have any complaints about your privacy rights or how your health information has been used or disclosed, you may file a complaint with us by contacting our Privacy Official listed on the first page of this Notice.

You may also file a written complaint with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights. We will not retaliate against you in any way if you choose to file a complaint.

