

Notice of Privacy Practices

Effective April 14, 2003

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.

The Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) is a federal program which requires that all medical records and other individually identifiable health information used or disclosed by Lisa Harrell Counseling Services, in any form, whether electronically, on paper, or orally, are kept properly confidential. This Act gives you, the client, significant new rights to understand and control how your health information is used. HIPAA provides penalties for covered entities that misuse personal health information.

As required by HIPAA, Lisa Harrell Counseling Services has prepared this explanation of how we are required to maintain the privacy of your health information and how we may use and disclose your treatment information.

We may use and disclose your medical records only for each of the following purposes: treatment, payment, and health-care operations.

- **Treatment** means providing, coordinating, or managing health care and related services by one or more health-care therapists. An example of this would include treatment session notes.
- **Payment** means such activities as obtaining reimbursement for services, confirming coverage, billing or collection activities, and utilization review. An example of this would be sending a bill for your visit to your insurance company for payment.
- **Health-care operations** include the business aspects of running our practice, such as conducting quality assessment and improvement activities, auditing functions, cost-management analysis, confirming appointments and customer service. An example would be an internal quality assessment review.

We may also create and distribute de-identified health information by removing all references to individually identifiable information.

We may contact you to provide appointment reminders or information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

Any other uses and disclosures will be made only with your written authorization. You may revoke such an authorization at any time by notifying, in writing. We are required to honor and abide by that written request except to the extent that we have already taken actions relying on your authorization.

You have the following rights with respect to your protected health information, which you can exercise by presenting a written request to the Privacy Officer:

- The right to request restriction on certain uses and disclosures of protected health information, including those related to disclosures to family members, other relatives, close personal friends, or any other person identified by you. We are, however, not required to agree to a requested restriction. If we do agree to a restriction, we must abide by it unless you agree, in writing, to remove it.
- The right to reasonable requests to receive confidential communications of protected health information from us by alternative means or at alternative locations.
- The right to inspect and copy your protected health information.
- The right to amend your protected health information.
- The right to obtain, and we have the obligation to provide to you, a paper copy of this notice from us at your first service delivery date.
- The right to provide and we are obligated to receive a written acknowledgement that you have received a copy of our *Notice of Privacy Practices*.

We are required, by law, to maintain the privacy of your protected health information and to provide you with a notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to protected health information.

This notice is effective as of April 14, 2003 and we are required to abide by the terms of the *Notice of Privacy Practices* currently in effect. We reserve the right to change the terms of our *Notice of Privacy Practices* and to make the new notice provisions effective for all protected health information that we maintain. We will post and you may request a written copy of a revised *Notice of Privacy Practices* from this office.

You have recourse if you feel that your privacy protections have been violated. You have the right to file a formal, written complaint with us at the address below, or with the Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Civil Rights, about violations of the provisions of this notice or the policies and procedures of our office. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

Please contact us for more information:

Privacy Officer
Lisa Harrell Counseling Services
821 Raymond Avenue, Suite 440
St. Paul, MN 55114

651-587-3542

For more information about HIPPA or to file a complaint:

The US Department of Health & Human Services
Office of Civil Rights
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20201
202-619-6775
Toll Free: 1-877-696-6775