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HPPA NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW PSYCHOLOGICAL AND MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO HIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

I. Uses and Disclosure for Treatment, Payment and Healthcare Operations

I may use or disclose your protected health information (**PHI**) for Treatment, Payment or Healthcare Operations purposes. To help clarify these terms, here are some definitions:

* "**PHI**" refers to information in your health record that could identify you.

* "**Treatment, Payment and Healthcare Operations**" -**Treatment** means diagnosis and psychotherapy. An example of treatment-related disclosure is

when I consult with another healthcare provider, such as your family physician or mental health care provider.

- **Payment** is financial compensation for treatment provided to you. (You will sign an authorization at intake if you will be requesting a bill for your insurer.) For example, I will give you documentation of diagnosis and treatment which contains your **PHI** so that you may share it with your insurer to obtain reimbursement.

- **Healthcare Operations** are activities that relate to the performance and operation of my practice. Examples of health care operations are quality assessment and improvement activities and business-related matters such as audits and administrative services.

* "**Use**" applies only to activities within my practice such as sharing, employing, applying, utilizing, examining and analyzing information that identifies you.

* "**Disclosure**" applies to activities outside of practice, such as releasing, transferring or providing access to information about you to other parties.

II. Uses and Disclosures Requiring Authorization

I may use or disclose PHI for purposes outside of treatment, payment or healthcare operations when your appropriate authorization is obtained. An "authorization" is written permission above and beyond the general consent that permits only specific disclosures. In those instances when I am asked for information for purposes outside of treatment, payment or healthcare operations, I will obtain an authorization from you before releasing this information.

You may revoke all such authorizations (of PHI or Psychotherapy Notes) at any time, provided each revocation is in writing. You may not revoke an authorization to the extent that: (1) I have relied on that authorization or (2) if the authorization was obtained as a condition of obtaining insurance coverage. Law provides the insurer the right to contest the claim under the policy.

III. Uses and Disclosure with Neither Consent nor Authorization

I may use or disclose PHI without your consent or authorization in the following circumstances:

* *Child Abuse* - If I, in the ordinary course of my profession, have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that any child under the age of eighteen years (1) has been abused or neglected, (2) has had non-accidental physical injury or injury which is at variance with the history given of such injury, inflicted upon such child, or (3) is placed at imminent risk of serious harm, then I must report this suspicion or belief to the appropriate authority.

* *Adult and Domestic Abuse* - If I know or in good faith suspect that an elderly or disabled or incompetent adult has been abused, I may disclose the appropriate information as permitted by law.

* *Health Oversight Activities* - If State or Government agencies are investigating my practice, they may subpoena records relevant to such investigation.

* *Audits* - There may be occasion when your insurance company may request an audit of records of their subscribers, which may include your records, in order to evaluate quality assurance.

* *Judicial and Administrative Proceedings* - If you are involved in a court proceeding, and a request is made for information about your diagnosis and treatment and the records thereof, such information is privileged under state law, and I will not release information without the written authorization of you or your legally appointed representative or a court order. The privilege may not apply when you are being evaluated for a third party or where the evaluation is court ordered. You will be informed in advance if this is the case.

* *Serious Threat to Health or Safety* - If I believe in good faith that there is risk of imminent personal injury to you or other individuals, I may disclose the appropriate information as permitted by law.

* *Worker's Compensation* - I may disclose protected health information regarding you as authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with laws relating to worker's compensation or other similar programs, established by law, that provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness without regard to fault.

IV. Patient's Rights and Psychologist's Duties

Patient's Rights:

* *Right to Request Restrictions* - You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of protected health information. However, I am not required to agree to a restriction you request.

* *Right to Receive Confidential Communications by Alternative Means and at Alternative Locations* - You have the right to request and receive confidential communications of PHI by alternative means and at alternative locations. (For example, you may not want a family member to know that you are seeing me. If you request it I will send your bills to another address.)

* *Right to Inspect and Copy* - You have the right to inspect or obtain a copy (or both) of PHI in my mental health and billing records used to make decisions about you for as long as the PHI is maintained in the record. I may deny your access to PHI under certain circumstances, but in some cases you may have this decision reviewed. On your request, I will discuss with you the details of the request and denial process. The law excludes psychotherapy notes from other PHI considerations. Any disclosure of psychotherapy records would only take place upon request of patient and agreement of clinician.

* *Right to Amend* - You have the right to request an amendment of PHI for as long as PHI is maintained in the record. I may deny your request. On your request, I will discuss with you the details of the amendment process.

* *Right to an Accounting* - You generally have the right to receive an accounting disclosure of PHI. On your request, I will discuss with you the details of the accounting process.

**Right to a Paper Copy* - You have the right to obtain a paper copy of the notice from me upon request.

Psychologist's Duties:

* I am required by law to maintain the privacy of PHI and to provide you with a notice of my legal duties and privacy practices with respect to PHI.

* I reserve the right to change the privacy policies and practices described in this notice. Unless I notify you of such changes, however, I am required to abide by the terms currently in effect.

* If I change my Notice of Privacy Practices, I will post the revised notice in my office. You may obtain a personal copy by calling my office.

V. Complaints

If you are concerned I have violated your privacy rights, or you disagree with a decision I have made about access to your records, you may contact me at the above address or send a written complaint to: Secretary of U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services at 200 Independence Ave., S.W., Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, D.C. 20201.

This Notice will go into effect on October 10, 2010^[11]_{SEP}