

MHDS OF THE EAST CENTRAL REGION

PRIVACY PRACTICES NOTICE

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 PRIVACY OF YOUR MEDICAL INFORMATION IS IMPORTANT TO US.

Our Legal Duty

We are required by applicable federal and state law to maintain the privacy of your protected health information. We are also required to give you this notice about our privacy practices, our legal duties, and your rights concerning your protected health information. We must follow the privacy practices that are described in this notice while it is in effect. This notice takes effect July 1, 2014, and will remain in effect until we replace it.

We reserve the right to change our privacy practices and the terms of this notice at any time, provided such changes are permitted by applicable law. We reserve the right to make the

changes in our privacy practices and the new terms of our notice effective for all protected health information that we maintain, including protected health information we created or received before we made the changes. Before we make a significant change in our privacy practices, we will change this notice and send the new notice to our active clients at the time of the change.

You may request a copy of our notice at any time. For more information about our privacy practices, or for additional copies of this notice, please contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice.

Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information

We use and disclose protected health information about you for treatment, payment, and health care operations. For example:

Treatment: We may use or disclose your protected health information to a physician or other health care provider in order to provide treatment to you.

Payment: We may use or disclose your protected health information to pay claims from providers, hospitals, or for other services delivered to you that are covered by MHDS of the East Central Region, to determine your eligibility for services, to coordinate your services, to issue explanations of benefits and the like. We may disclose your information to a health care or service provider subject to the federal Privacy Rules so they can engage in billing/payment activity.

Operations: We may use and disclose your information in connection with our operations. Our operations include:

- rating our risk;
- quality assessment and improvement activities
- reviewing the competence or qualifications of mental health/disability services professionals,

- medical review, legal services, and auditing, including fraud and abuse detection and compliance;
- business planning and development; and
- business management and general administrative activities, including management activities relating to privacy, customer service, resolution of internal grievances, and creating de-identified information or a limited data set.

We may disclose your information to another entity which has a relationship with you and is subject to the federal Privacy Rules, for their operations relating to quality assessment and improvement activities, reviewing the competence or qualifications of health care and service professionals, or detecting or preventing fraud and abuse.

On Your Authorization: You may give us written authorization to use your protected health information or to disclose to anyone for any purpose. If you give us an authorization, you may revoke it in writing at any time. Your revocation will not affect any use or disclosures permitted by

evaluating provider performance, conducting training programs, accreditation, certification, licensing or credentialing activities;

information for marketing purposes and disclosures that constitute a sale of protected health information, require your authorization. Unless you give us a written authorization, we will not use or disclose your protected health information for any reason except those described in this notice.

To Your Family and Friends: We may disclose your protected health information to a family member, friend or other person to the extent necessary to help with your services. We may use or disclose your name, location, and general condition or death to notify, or assist in the notification of (including identifying or locating), a person involved in your care.

Before we disclose your protected health information to a person involved in your care, services or payment for services, we will provide you with an opportunity to object to such uses or disclosures. If you are not present, or in the event of your incapacity or an emergency, we will disclose your protected health information based on our professional judgment of whether the disclosure would be in your best interest.

Disaster Relief: We may use or disclose your protected health information to a public or private entity authorized by law or by its charter to assist in disaster relief efforts.

your authorization while it was in effect. To the extent that we maintain or receive psychotherapy notes about you, most disclosures of these notes require your authorization. In addition, most uses and disclosures of protected health

Public Benefit: We may use or disclose your protected health information as authorized by law for the following purposes deemed to be in the public interest or benefit:

- as required by law;
- for public health activities, including disease and vital statistic reporting, child abuse reporting, FDA oversight, and to employers regarding work-related illness or injury;
- to report adult abuse, neglect, or domestic violence;
- to health oversight agencies;
- in response to court and administrative orders and other lawful processes;
- to law enforcement officials pursuant to subpoenas and other lawful processes, concerning crime victims, suspicious deaths, crimes on our premises, reporting crimes in emergencies, and for purposes of identifying or locating a suspect or other person;
- to coroners, medical examiners, and funeral directors;
- to organ procurement organizations;
- to avert a serious threat to health or safety;
- in connection with certain research activities;
- to the military and to federal officials for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence, and national security activities;
- to correctional institutions regarding inmates; and
- as authorized by state worker's compensation laws.

Individual Rights

Access: You have the right to look at or get copies of your protected health information, with limited exceptions. You may request that we provide copies in a format other than photocopies. This may include an electronic copy in certain circumstances. We will use the format you request unless we cannot practicably do so. You must make a request in writing to obtain access to your protected health information. You may obtain a form to request access by using the contact information listed at the end of this notice. You may also request access by sending us a letter to the address at the end of this notice. If you request copies, we will charge you \$0.25 for each page, \$12.00 per hour for staff time to locate and copy your protected health information, and postage if

listed at the end of this notice for a full explanation of our fee structure.

Disclosure Accounting: You have the right to receive a list of instances in which we or our business associates disclosed your protected health information for purposes other than treatment, payment, health care operations, as authorized by you, and for certain other activities, since April 14, 2003. We will provide you with the date on which we made the disclosure, the name of the person or entity to which we disclosed your protected health information, a description of the protected health information we disclosed, the reason for the disclosure, and certain other information. If you

you want the copies mailed to you. If you request an alternative format, we will charge a cost-based fee for providing your protected health information in that format. If you prefer, we will prepare a summary or an explanation of your protected health information for a fee. Contact us using the information

request this accounting more than once in a 12-month period, we may charge you a reasonable, cost-based fee for responding to these additional requests. Contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice for a full explanation of our fee structure.

Restriction: You have the right to request that we place additional restrictions on our use or disclosure of your protected health information. We are not required to agree to these additional restrictions, but if we do, we will abide by our agreement (except in an emergency). Any agreement to additional restrictions must be in writing signed by a person authorized to make such an agreement on our behalf. We will not be bound unless our agreement is so memorialized in writing.

Confidential Communication: You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your protected health information by alternative means or to alternative locations. You must make your request in writing, and you must state that the information could endanger you if it is not communicated in confidence as you request. We must accommodate your request if it is reasonable, specifies the alternative means or locations and continues to allow us to conduct normal business operations.

Amendment: You have the right to request that we amend your protected health information. Your request must be in writing, and it must explain why the information should be amended. We may deny your request if we did not create the information you want amended and the originator remains available or for certain other reasons. If we deny your request, we will provide you a written explanation. You may respond with a statement of disagreement to be appended to the information you wanted amended. If we accept your request to amend the information, we will make reasonable efforts to inform others, including people you name, of the amendment and to include the changes in any future disclosures of that information.

Electronic Notice: If you receive this notice on our web site or by electronic mail (e-mail), you are entitled to receive this notice in written form. Please contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice to obtain this notice in written form.

Breach Notification: In the event of a breach of your unsecured protected health information, we will provide you notification of such a breach, as required by law.

Questions and Complaints

If you want more information about our privacy practices or have questions or concerns, please contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice.

If you are concerned that we may have violated your privacy rights or you disagree with a decision we made about access to your protected health information or in response to a request you made to amend or restrict the use or disclosure of your protected health information or to have us communicate with you by alternative means or at alternative locations, you

may complain to us using the contact information listed at the end of this notice. You also may submit a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We will provide you with the address to file your complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services upon request.

We support your right to the privacy of your protected health information. We will not retaliate in any way if you choose to file a complaint with us or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Contact Officer: Jan Heidemann
Telephone: (319) 352-2993
Address: Bremer County Annex
203 1st Avenue NE
Waverly, IA 50677

Email: jheidemann@co.bremer.ia.us
Fax: (319) 352-2997