



NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

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.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION

Each time you visit a hospital, physician, or other healthcare provider, a record of your visit is made in order to manage the care you receive. The Texas Health Physicians Group understands that the medical information that is recorded about you and your health is personal. The confidentiality of your health information is also protected under both state and federal law.

This Notice of Privacy Practices describes how Texas Health Physicians Group may use and disclose your information and the rights that you have regarding your health information.

Texas Health Physicians Group is in the process of transitioning from a paper-based health record to an electronic health record and will not use or disclose your health information without written authorization, except as described in this Notice. Use or disclosure pursuant to this Notice may include electronic transfer of your health information.

YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION RIGHTS

Although your health information is the physical property of the facility or practitioner that compiled it, the information belongs to you, and you have certain rights over that information. You have the right to:

- Request, in writing, a restriction on certain uses and disclosures of your health information. However, agreement with the request is not required by law, such as when it is determined that compliance with the restriction cannot be guaranteed. In addition, you have the right to request, in writing, a restriction on disclosures of health information to a health plan with respect to treatment services for which you have paid out of pocket in full. In this case, we will honor the request. It will be your responsibility to notify any other provider of this restriction.
- Request by written authorization to inspect or obtain a copy of your health record as provided by law;
- Request, in writing, that your health record be amended as provided by law, if you feel the health information we have about you is incorrect or incomplete. You will be notified if the request cannot be granted;
- Request that we communicate with you about your health information in a specific way or at a specific location. Reasonable requests will be accommodated;
- Request in writing to obtain an accounting of disclosures or a report of who has accessed your health information as provided by law. The access report will only be available after federal regulations become effective.
- Obtain a paper copy of this Notice of Privacy Practices on request.

You may exercise these rights by directing a request to the Privacy Officer contact listed on this Notice.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Texas Health Physicians Group has certain responsibilities regarding your health information, including the requirement to:

- Maintain the privacy of your health information;
- Provide you with this Notice that describes Texas Health Physicians Group legal duties and privacy practices regarding the information that we maintain about you;
- Abide by the terms of the Notice currently in effect.
- Inform you that the clinic(s) must keep your medical records for a time period required by law and then may dispose of them as permitted by law.

Texas Health Physicians Group reserves the right to change these information privacy policies and practices and to make the changes applicable to any health information that we maintain. If changes are made, the revised Notice of Privacy Practices will be made available at each Texas Health Physicians Group practice, posted on the web site, and will be supplied when requested.

Uses and Disclosures of Health Information without Authorization

When you obtain services from any Texas Health Physicians Group practice, certain uses and disclosures of your health information are necessary and permitted by law in order to treat you, to process payments for your treatment and to support the operations of the entity and other involved providers. The following categories describe ways that Texas Health Physicians Group practices use or disclose your information, and some representative examples are provided in each category. All of the ways your health information is used or disclosed should fall within one of these categories.

Your health information will be used for treatment.

For example: Disclosures of medical information about you may be made to doctors, nurses, technicians, medical residents or others who are involved in taking care of you at a Texas Health Physicians Group practice. This information may be disclosed to other physicians who are treating you or to other healthcare facilities involved in your care. Information may be shared with pharmacies, laboratories or radiology centers for the coordination of different treatments.

Your health information will be used for payment.

For example: Health information about you may be disclosed so that services provided to you may be billed to an insurance company or a third party. Information may be provided to your health plan about treatment you are going to receive in order to obtain prior approval or to determine if your health plan will cover the treatment.

Your health information will be used for health care operations.

For example: The information in your health record may be used to evaluate and improve the quality of the care and services we provide. Students, volunteers, and trainees may have access to your health information for training and treatment purposes as they participate in continuing education, training, internships, and residency programs.

Health Information Exchange (HIE).

Texas Health Physicians Group participates in electronic health exchanges and may share your health information as described in this Notice. Participation is voluntary. You will be given the opportunity to opt in to the electronic health information exchanges at the time of registration.

Business Associates: There are some services that we provide through contracts with third party business associates. Examples include transcription agencies and copying services. To protect your health information, Texas Health Physicians Group practices require these business associates to appropriately protect your information.

Directory: Unless you give notice of an objection, your name, location in the facility, general condition and religious affiliation will be used for patient directories, in those practices where such

directories are maintained. This information may be provided to members of the clergy. This information, except for religious affiliation, may also be provided to other people who ask for you by name.

Continuity of Care: In order to provide for the continuity of your care once you are discharged from one of our facilities, your information may be shared with other healthcare providers such as home health agencies. Information about you may be disclosed to community services agencies in order to obtain their services on your behalf.

Disclosures Requiring Verbal Agreement

Unless you give notice of an objection, and in accordance with your agreement, medical information may be released to a family member or other person who is involved in your medical care or who helps pay for your care. Information about you may be disclosed to notify a family member, legally authorized representative or other person responsible for your care about your location and general condition. This may include disclosures of information about you to an organization assisting in a disaster relief effort, such as the American Red Cross, so that your family can be notified about your condition. You will be given an opportunity to agree or object to these disclosures except as due to your incapacity or in emergency circumstances.

Disclosures Required by Law or otherwise Allowed without Authorization or Notification.

The following disclosures of health information may be made according to state and federal law without your written authorization or verbal agreement:

- When a disclosure is required by federal, state or local law, judicial or administrative proceedings, or for law enforcement. Examples would be reporting gunshot wounds or child abuse, or responding to court orders;
- For public health purposes, such as reporting information about births, deaths, and various diseases, or disclosures to the FDA regarding adverse events related to food, medications or devices;
- For health oversight activities, such as audits, inspections or licensure investigations;
- To organ procurement organizations for the purpose of tissue donation and transplant;
- For research purposes, when the research has been approved by an institutional review board that has reviewed the research proposal and established guidelines to provide for the privacy of your health information; or the disclosure is that of a limited data set, where personal identifiers have been removed.
- To coroners and funeral directors for the purpose of identification, the determination of the cause of death, or to perform their duties as authorized by law;
- To avoid a serious threat to the health or safety of a person or the public;
- For specific government functions, such as protection of the President of the United States;
- For workers' compensation purposes;
- To military command authorities as required for members of the armed forces;
- To authorized federal officials for national security and intelligence activities as authorized by law;
- To correctional institutions or law enforcement officials concerning the health information of inmates, as authorized by law.

Other Allowable Uses and Disclosures without Authorization

Other uses or disclosures of your health information that may be made include:

- Contacting you to provide appointment reminders for treatment or medical care, as well as to recommend treatment alternatives;
- Notifying you of health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you;

- Contacting you about disease management programs, wellness programs, or other community-based initiatives or activities in which Texas Health Physicians Group participates.
- If Texas Health Physicians Group is paid by any third party to provide communications to you because you are a patient, you will be informed that Texas Health Physicians Group is being paid. You have the right to opt out of receiving such communications.
- Using your health information for the purposes of fundraising for a Texas Health Physicians Group practice. You will have the opportunity to opt out of any future communications. Contact the Privacy Officer on this Notice for instructions on opting out.

Breach Notification

In certain instances, you have the right to be notified in the event that we, or one of our business associates, discover an inappropriate use or disclosure of your health information. Notice of any such use or disclosure will be made as required by state and federal law.

Required Uses and Disclosures

Under the law we must make disclosures when required by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to investigate or determine our compliance with federal privacy law.

Uses and Disclosures Requiring Authorization

Any other uses or disclosures of your health information not addressed in this Notice or otherwise required by law will be made only with your written authorization. You may revoke such authorization at any time. Specific examples of uses and disclosures requiring authorization include: use of psychotherapy notes, marketing activities, and some types of sale of your health information.

Privacy Complaints

You have the right to file a complaint if you believe your privacy rights have been violated. This complaint may be addressed to the Privacy Officer contact listed in this Notice, or to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. There will be no retaliation for registering a complaint.

Privacy Contact

Address any questions about this Notice or how to exercise your privacy rights to the applicable Privacy Officer Contact listed below.

Effective Date

September 23, 2013

Privacy Officer Contact:

Texas Health Physicians Group
(214) 860-6300

Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

THPG.org is designed to comply with existing and proposed federal standards for the privacy and confidentiality of health care information. The database and software components are structured to provide that maintenance and routine troubleshooting occur with no access to your personal information. A security system helps protect against unauthorized access or misuse by authorized users.

All forms that request personal information (name, address, e-mail address, etc.) employ the https communications protocol to ensure secure and encrypted transmissions over the Internet.

Access and Disclosure

THPG.org does not disclose or provide access to any personal information to anyone without your permission, unless ordered to do so by a court of law or otherwise required by law. There may be isolated instances in which the staff must access the database to repair problems. Any access to individual files is carefully controlled. Staff members must document the need for access, log details of the access when complete, and confirm to management that they have accessed only task-critical areas and are in compliance with confidentiality policies.

Links to Third Party Sites

The THPG.org Internet site may contain links to other Internet sites ("Linked Sites"). Links are strictly for informational purposes, and the appropriateness of such links is based on the judgment of the THPG.org Internet Work Group. The Linked Sites are most likely not under the control of Texas Health Physicians Group, and Texas Health Physicians Group is not responsible for the content of any Linked Site that it does not control, including without limitation any link contained in a Linked Site, or any changes or updates to a Linked Site. Texas Health Physicians Group is not responsible for webcasting or any other form of transmission received from any Linked Site. Texas Health Physicians Group provides these links as a convenience, and the inclusion of any link does not imply endorsement of the site by Texas Health Physicians Group or any association with its operators.

Linked sites will open in a new browser window, clearly indicating to users that they are leaving the THPG.org Internet site.

Texas Health Physicians Group annually re-evaluates all external health related websites to which it links.

Passive Tracking Mechanisms

THPG.org is firmly committed to protecting the privacy of website visitors.

THPG.org uses Web logs and temporary Internet cookies to gather aggregate, not individual data, about site visitors. We use remarketing tracking pixels and visitor browsing data to serve internet advertising to past site visitors and to reach similar audiences.

The following information is contained in these Web logs:

- The date and time of the visit as well as length of stay
- The pages of THPG.org viewed during the visit
- The IP address of the computer used to visit the site
- The type of Web browser and operating system used to view the site
- The Internet domain from which a visitor accessed the site

THPG.org uses Web logs as a way of conducting basic market research and to study how the site is being used. THPG.org periodically analyzes the Web logs and may implement improvements or refinements based on information in the Web logs.

Cookies are packets of information that a website transfers to a user's computer for record-keeping purposes. They are a means of keeping track of a user's preferences during a visit to a Web site. Some services on our website use multi-session cookies, also known as "persistent cookies." Persistent cookies are:

- Small bits of text temporarily stored in your computer.
- Placed on your computer for more than a single session.
- Used to differentiate between new and returning site visitors, to customize our website for frequent visitors, and to assess site design and content.

Persistent cookies placed on your computer will expire two years after your last visit to our website.

Texas Health uses cookies from third party vendors to serve ads based on past visits to THPG.org

Use and Sharing of Cookie Data

We do not use session cookies or persistent cookies to collect PHI and we do not share any data collected from cookies.

If you do not want information to be collected via cookies, you can turn off cookies in your browser. To turn off cookies in Microsoft Internet Explorer, choose Tools from the top navigation, select Internet Options, choose Privacy and change the settings for THPG.org. Information on THPG.org may be read with cookies turned off.

We collect and store no other information about you when you visit our site unless you choose to provide it. For example:

- If you send us an email or submit an online form, we will receive only the personal information you include in the form.

Spyware

THPG.org does not deploy spyware or any software that aids in gathering information about a person or organization without their knowledge and which may send such information to another entity without the consumer's consent.

Texas Health Resources Corporate Office

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