



The Hospital of Central Connecticut

THE HOSPITAL OF CENTRAL CONNECTICUT NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Effective Date: April 14, 2003

This Notice describes how medical/health information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information.

Please review it carefully.

We are required by law to keep your health information private; to give you this detailed Notice of our legal duties and privacy practices relating to your health information; and to follow the terms of this Notice.

I. Who is Covered by this Notice

This Notice covers The Hospital of Central Connecticut and all of its employees including all of its satellite offices and its employed physicians and their office practices. This Notice also covers members of The Hospital of Central Connecticut's medical staff but only when these doctors are seeing you as a patient at the hospital. These doctors have their own Notices of Privacy Practice and policies for their office practices.

II. Uses and Disclosures for Treatment, Payment and Health Care Operations

We are allowed to use and disclose (give out) your health information for treatment, payment and health care operations.

For Treatment. We will use and disclose your health information for care and treatment. Your health information will be used by doctors, nurses, and others involved in your care. For example, the hospital pharmacist will need certain information to fill a prescription ordered by your doctor. We may also give your health information to people when we are arranging your care after you leave the hospital.

For Payment. We may use and disclose your health information for billing and payment purposes. We may disclose your health information to an insurance company. For example, we may contact Medicare or your health plan to confirm your coverage or to request prior approval for your treatment or service.

For Health Care Operations. We may use and disclose your health information for health care operations, such as education and training and monitoring our quality of care. For example, health information of many patients may be combined and looked at to check and improve quality of care and services.

III. Specific Uses and Disclosures of Your Health Information

The following is how we may use or disclose your health information.

Hospital Directory. Each time you come to the hospital, we will include certain limited information about you in our directory unless you tell us not to. This information may include your name, your room and telephone number in the Hospital, your general condition and your religious affiliation (clergy only). Our directory does not include specific medical information about you. We may disclose directory information to members of the clergy and to people who ask for you by name.

People Involved in Your Care or Payment for Your Care. We may disclose health information about you to a family member, close personal friend or other person you identify who is involved in your care.

Disaster Relief. We may disclose health information about you to a disaster relief organization.

Emergencies. We may use or disclose your health information as necessary in emergency situations.

As Required By Law. We may use or disclose your health information when required by law to do so.

Public Health Activities. We may disclose your health information for public health activities, such as preventing or controlling disease and reporting births and deaths.

Reporting Victims of Abuse or Neglect. If we believe that you have been a victim of abuse or neglect, we may use and disclose your health information to notify a government authority.

Health Oversight Activities. We may disclose your health information to health oversight agencies for their audits, investigations, and inspections of the health care system.

Judicial and Administrative Proceedings. We may disclose your health information when we receive a court or administrative order. We also may disclose information when we receive a subpoena or discovery request.

Law Enforcement. We may disclose your health information to the police and other law enforcement agencies because of a warrant or to answer questions about a crime.

Research. We may use or disclose your health information for research purposes if the privacy aspects of the research have been reviewed and approved; if the researcher is collecting information in preparing a research proposal; if the research occurs after your death.

Business Associates. We may use or disclose your health information to our business associates who perform services for the hospital. Examples of a business associate are individuals or companies that transcribe or copy medical records. The hospital requires all of its business associates to protect health information.

Coroners, Medical Examiners, Funeral Directors, Organ Procurement Organizations. We may use or disclose your health information to a coroner, medical examiner, funeral director or to an organization involved in the donation of organs and tissue.

To Prevent or Lessen a Serious Threat to Health or Safety. We may use or disclose health information to someone able to help lessen or prevent a serious threat to a person or the public.

Military, Veterans and other Specific Government Functions. If you are a member of the armed forces, we may use and disclose your health information as required by military command authorities. We may disclose health information for national security purposes and to protect the President of the United States or other officials.

Workers' Compensation. We may use or disclose your health information to workers' compensation or similar programs.

Inmates/Law Enforcement Custody. If you are an inmate of a correctional institution or in the custody of a law enforcement official, we may disclose your health information to the institution or official to protect the health and safety of you and others.

Fundraising Activities. We may use certain limited information for fundraising purposes.

Appointment Reminders. We may use or disclose health information to remind you about appointments.

Treatment Alternatives and Health Related Services. We may use or disclose your health information to inform you about treatment alternatives and health related services that may interest you.

IV. Uses and Disclosures with your Authorization

Except for the situations described above, we will use and disclose your health information only with your written Authorization. An Authorization must state other uses or disclosures that you are allowing. You may revoke (take back) an Authorization in writing at any time. If you revoke an Authorization, we will no longer use or disclose your health information for the reasons listed in the Authorization, unless we have already acted on the Authorization.

V. Your Rights regarding your Health Information

Your rights regarding your health information are listed below.

Request Restrictions. You have the right to ask us to limit the use or disclosure of your health information. We are not required to agree to the restriction you request.

Access to Personal Health Information. You have the right to inspect and obtain a copy of your medical or billing records. In most cases we will charge a reasonable fee.

Request Amendment. You have the right to request a change to your health information for as long as the information is maintained by the Hospital. We are not required to agree to your request.

Request an Accounting of Disclosures. You have the right to request a listing of certain disclosures of your health information made by the Hospital or by others for us. You may be charged a reasonable fee for this accounting.

Request a Paper Copy of This Notice. You have the right to obtain a paper copy of this Notice. You may obtain a copy of this Notice at our website at www.thocc.org.

Request Confidential Communications. You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your health matters in a certain way or at a certain location. We may agree to your reasonable requests.

Requests for restrictions and confidential communications must be made each time you receive services at The Hospital of Central Connecticut. All of the above requests must be made in writing.

VI. Special Rules regarding Disclosure of Psychiatric, Substance Abuse and HIV-Related Information

Special restrictions may apply for disclosures of health information about psychiatric conditions, substance abuse or HIV-related testing and treatment. Except as listed below and as specifically permitted under state or federal law, health information about psychiatric conditions, substance abuse or HIV-related testing and treatment may not be disclosed without your Authorization.

- **Psychiatric information.** If needed for your diagnosis or treatment in a mental health program, psychiatric information may be disclosed. Very limited information may be disclosed for payment purposes.
- **HIV-related information.** HIV-related information may be disclosed for purposes of treatment or payment.

- Substance abuse treatment. If you are treated in a specialized substance abuse program, your Authorization will be needed for most disclosures, not including emergencies.

VII. For Further Information or to File a Complaint

If you have any questions about this Notice or would like further information concerning your privacy rights, please contact The Hospital of Central Connecticut's Privacy Officer at (860) 224-5686, option #7.

If you believe that your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint in writing with the Hospital or with the Office of Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We will not retaliate against you if you file a complaint.

To file a complaint with the Hospital, contact the Executive Assistant, Patient Care Services, at (860) 224-5640. You may contact the Office of Civil Rights at 1-800-368-1019 or ocrmail@hhs.gov.

VIII. Changes to this Notice

We have the right to change this Notice. The new Notice may apply to all health information we have already received and which we will receive in the future. A copy of the Notice will be posted in the Hospital and on the Hospital website. We will make available a copy of the revised Notice to all patients.