

Notice of Privacy Practices (Effective Date: September 1, 2012)

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 (HIPAA) requires licensed mental health professionals to notify clients of the ways your mental health information and records are used and released by your mental health care providers and the client's rights regarding control over such information.

- 1. Restrictions and Disclosure:** All medical records and all communications between a physician or psychotherapist and his/her mental health client are confidential and may not be disclosed without a written release by the client (or his/her representative) or by an order of the court (Okla. Stat. Tit. 43A, 1-109). Disclosure without the client's consent is permitted to other persons or agencies actively engaged in the client's treatment or in related administrative work. With the client's consent, a limited disclosure of information may be made to responsible family members. If the client is a minor, written consent of the parent or childcare agency with legal custody of the child is required.
- 2. Appointment Reminder:** Our facility and its professional staff may use and disclose your protected health information to contact you as a reminder that you have an appointment for treatment or mental health care at the facility. This may be done through an automated system or by one of our staff members. If you are not at home, we may leave this information on your answering machine or in a message left with the person answering the telephone. You have the right to stop appointment reminders if you will let us know your decision.
- 3. Serious Threat to Health and Safety:** Our facility and its professional staff may use and disclose protected health information about you when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of the public or another person. Any disclosure, however, would only be to someone able to help prevent the threat. This includes release of information regarding abuse of a child, adult, or aged person.
- 4. Payment and Insurance Benefit:** Our facility and its administrative and/or professional staff may ordinarily use and disclose protected health information about you so that the treatment services you receive at the facility or by professional staff may be billed to and payment collected from you, an insurance company, or a third party. We may also tell your health plan about a treatment you are going to receive to obtain prior approval or to determine whether your plan will cover the treatment. Some insurance companies and/or managed care agencies may periodically audit client charts to ensure that appropriate documentation of services provided has been completed by your therapist.
- 5. Patient Access:** A mental health client is not entitled to personal access to the information contained in his/her psychiatric or psychological records unless the treating practitioner consents or a court orders access (Okla. Stat. Tit. 43A, 1-109(B)). This provision encompasses the psychiatric and psychological records maintained by psychotherapists, mental health institutions, drug or alcohol abuse treatment facilities and others. The treating practitioner is to determine not only what information is to be released, but also the manner in which it is to be disclosed to the patient.