

Understanding Your Health Record/Information

Each time you visit a healthcare provider, a record of your visit is made. Typically, this record contains your symptoms, examination and test results, diagnoses, treatment, and a plan for future care or treatment. This information, often referred to as your health or medical record, serves as:

- a basis for planning your care and treatment;
- a means of communication among the many health professionals who contribute to your care;
- a legal document describing the care you received;
- a means by which you or a third party payer can verify that services billed were actually provided;
- a tool for educating health professionals;
- a source of data for medical research;
- a source of information for public health officials charged with improving the health of the nation; and
- a tool with which we can assess and continually work to improve the care we render and the outcomes we achieve.

Understanding what is in your record and how your health information is used helps you to:

- make sure it is accurate;
- better understand who, what, when, where and why others may access your health information; and
- make more informed decisions when authorizing disclosure to others.

Although your health record is the physical property of the healthcare practitioner or facility that compiled it, the information belongs to you, the patient. You have the right:

To request a restriction of your protected health information.

This means you may ask us not to use or disclose any part of your protected health information for the purposes of treatment, payment or healthcare operations. You may also request that any part of your protected health information not be disclosed to family members or friends who may be involved in your care or for notification purposes as described in this Notice of Privacy Practices. Your request must state the specific restriction requested and to whom you want the restriction to apply. You may request a restriction by signing our restriction form.

Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC is not required to agree to a restriction that you may request. If Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC believes it is in your best interest to permit use and disclosure of your protected health information, we will tell you so and why. If Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC does agree to the requested restriction, we will not use or disclose your protected health information in violation of that restriction unless it is needed to provide emergency treatment or is required by law.

To inspect and copy your protected health information. This means you may inspect and obtain a copy of protected health information about you that is contained in a designated record set for as long as we maintain the protected health information. A “designated record set” contains medical and billing records and any other records that Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC uses for making decisions about you. There is a charge for a copy of your

medical information. Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC may deny access to health information if we determine that the release of information could be harmful to the physical, mental or emotional health of a patient or could endanger a patient.

To have Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC amend your protected health information.

If you believe that the protected health information about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may request an amendment on the form provided by Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC, which requires certain specific information. Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC is not required to accept the amendment. Please contact us if you have questions about amending your medical record.

Your PHI is subject to electronic disclosure. Following are some examples of the types of uses and disclosures of your protected healthcare information that Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC is permitted to make. These examples are not meant to be exhaustive, but to describe the types of uses and disclosures that may be made by Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC.

Uses and Disclosures for Treatment, Payment and Healthcare Operations

Treatment: We will use and disclose your protected health information to provide, coordinate or manage your healthcare and any related services. This includes the coordination or management of your healthcare with a third-party provider. For example, we would disclose protected health information to another physician or healthcare provider (e.g., a specialist or laboratory) who, at the request of your treatment provider, becomes involved in your care. Whenever an arrangement between Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC and a business associate involves the use or disclosure of your protected health information, we will have a written contract that contains terms that will protect the privacy of your protected health information.

Payment: Your protected health information will be used, as needed, to obtain payment for your healthcare services. This may include providing health information for making a determination of eligibility or coverage for insurance benefits, reviewing services provided to you for medical necessity, and undertaking utilization review activities.

Healthcare Operations: We may use or disclose to appropriate parties your protected health information in order to support the programs and activities of Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC and/or other covered entities that have provided or will provide healthcare services to you. These activities include, but are not limited to, quality assessment activities, employee review activities, training of medical students, licensing, and conducting or arranging for other business activities.

For example, we may use your protected health information to assess the quality of care at Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC. We may use or disclose your protected health information, as necessary, for schedule reminders or to provide you with information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

Permitted and Required Uses and Disclosures That May Be Made Without Your Authorization

Abuse or Neglect: To Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, or other governmental body that is authorized by law to receive reports of abuse or neglect. The disclosure will be made consistent with the requirements of applicable federal and state laws.

Communicable Diseases: To a person who may have been exposed to a communicable disease or may otherwise be at risk of contracting or spreading the disease or condition.

Coroners, Medical Examiners and Funeral Directors: To a coroner, medical examiner or funeral director to perform duties authorized by law.

Correctional Institution: Health information about inmates of correctional institutions may be released to the institution.

Federal Laws: When required by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to investigate or determine our compliance with the requirements of federal law.

Food and Drug Administration: To a person or company required by the Food and Drug Administration to report adverse events, product defects or problems, biologic product deviations, or to track products; to enable product recalls; to make repairs or replacements; or to conduct post-marketing surveillance.

Group Health Plans: Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC maintains a group health plan for its employees, and may disclose protected health information of individuals covered under this plan to the sponsor of the group health plan as permitted by law.

Health Oversight: The Texas State Board of Medical Examiners, Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, or other health oversight agency for activities authorized by law, such as audits, investigations, surveys and inspections.

Law Enforcement: For purposes including (1) legal processes and as required by law, (2) limited information requests for identification and location purposes, (3) authorized uses pertaining to witnesses, defendants or victims of a crime, (4) suspicion that death has occurred as a result of criminal conduct, (5) a crime that occurred on the premises, and (6) medical emergency (not on the premises) in which it is likely that a crime has occurred.

Legal Proceedings: In the course of any judicial or administrative proceeding, in response to an order of a court or administrative tribunal (to the extent such disclosure is expressly authorized), and in certain circumstances in response to a subpoena, discovery request or other lawful process.

Specialized Government Functions: Protected health information of individuals who are Armed Forces personnel (1) for activities deemed necessary by appropriate military command authorities; (2) for the purpose of a determination by the Department of Veterans Affairs of your eligibility for benefits; or (3) to foreign military authority if you are a member of that foreign military service. We may also disclose your protected health information to authorized federal

officials for conducting national security and intelligence activities, including for the provision of protective services to the President or others legally authorized.

Organ and Tissue Donation: To organizations that handle organ procurement or transplantation or to an organ donation bank to facilitate organ or tissue donation and transplantation.

Public Health: To the CDC, the Texas Department of Health and other public health authorities for public health activities as permitted by law.

Required By Law: Use or disclosure will be made in compliance with the law and will be limited to the relevant requirements of the law. You will be notified, if required by law, of any such uses or disclosures.

Research: To researchers when their research has been approved by an institutional review board that has reviewed the research proposal and established protocols to ensure the privacy of your protected health information.

Safety: To prevent a serious threat to health or safety.

Workers' Compensation: To comply with workers' compensation laws and other similar legally established programs.

Uses and Disclosures That May Be Made Unless You Object

Family and Friends: We may disclose protected health information to a family member, other relative, friend or any other person you identify, if the information is relevant to that person's involvement with your care or payment for your care. If you are unable to agree or if you object to such a disclosure, we may disclose such information as necessary if we determine that it is in your best interest based on our professional judgment.

Marketing: Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC must obtain your authorization for most marketing purposes except for information about services and treatment alternatives. You may contact our Privacy Office to request that you not be contacted and future marketing material not be sent to you.

Uses and Disclosures Requiring Your Written Authorization

Other uses and disclosures of your protected health information will be made only with your written authorization, unless otherwise permitted or required by law as described above. You may revoke your authorization at any time in writing. Of course, we are unable to take back any disclosures that have already been made with your authorization.

You may obtain a paper copy of this Notice from us even if you have agreed to accept this Notice electronically.

You may complain to Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC or to the Secretary of Health and Human Services if you believe your privacy rights have been violated by Jacobs Ladder Psychological Services, PLLC. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

You may contact our Privacy Office at (281) 512-4734 for further information about the complaint process.

If you wish to file a complaint with the Department of Health and Human Services, you may write to:

Office for Civil Rights

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

1301 Young Street, Suite 1169

Dallas, TX 75202

(214) 767-4056 Voice

(214) 767-0432 FAX

This notice is effective on January 10, 2013.

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