

Notice of Health Information and Privacy Practices

This notice describes how information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. Please review it carefully.

Introduction

At Bowman Medical Group, we are committed to treating and using protected health information about you responsibly. This notice of Health Information Practices describes the personal information we collect, and how and when we use or disclose that information. It also describes your rights as they relate to your protected health information. This notice is effective January 1st, 2007 and applies to all protected health information as defined by federal regulations.

Understanding Your Health Record/Information

Each time you visit Bowman Medical Group, 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,
- Means of communication among the many health professionals who contribute to your care,
- Legal document describing the care you received,
- Means by which you or a third-party payer can verify that services billed were actually provided,
- A tool in educating health professionals,
- A source of data for medical research,
- A source of information for public health officials, charged with improving the health of this state and the nation,
- A source for data for our planning and marketing, 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: ensure its accuracy, better understand who, what, when, where, and why others may access your health information, and make more informed decisions when authorizing disclosure to others.

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Your Health Information Rights

Although your health record is the physical property of Bowman Medical Group, the information belongs to you. You have the right to:

- Obtain a paper copy of this notice of information practices upon request,
- Inspect and copy your health record as provided in 45 CFR 164.524,
- Amend your health record as provided in 45 CFR 164.528,
- Obtain an accounting of disclosures of your health information as provided in 45 CFR 164.528,
- Request communications of your health information by alternative means or at alternative locations,
- Request a restriction on certain uses and disclosures of your information as provided by 45 CFR 164.522, and
- Revoke your authorization to use or disclose health information except to the extent that action has already been taken.

Our Responsibilities

Bowman Medical Group is required to:

- Maintain the privacy of your health information,
- Provide you with this notice as to our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to information we collect and maintain about you,
- Abide by the terms of this notice,
- Notify you if we are unable to agree to a requested restriction, and
- Accommodate reasonable requests you may have to communicate health information by alternative means or at alternative locations.

Examples of Disclosures for Treatment, Payment and Health Operations

Treatment: Information obtained by a nurse, physician, or other member of your health care team will be recorded in your record and used to determine the course of treatment that should work best for you. Your physician will document in your record his or her expectations of the members of your health care team. Members of your health care team will then record the actions they took and their observations. In that way, the physician will know how you are responding to treatment.

We will also provide physicians or subsequent health care providers, pharmacies, and imaging centers that we may refer you to with health information to assist them in treating you.

Payment: A bill may be sent to you or a third-party payer. The information on or accompanying the bill may include information that identifies you, as well as your diagnosis, procedures, and supplies used.

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Healthcare Operations: We may use or disclose, as needed, your protected health information in order to support the business activities of your physician's practice. 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. In addition, we may use a sign-in sheet at the registration desk where you will be asked to sign your name and indicate your physician. We may also call you by name, as necessary, to contact you to discuss an appointment. We may leave a message at your home or place of employment with a request to contact this office.

We may use or disclose your protected health information in the following situations without your authorization. These situations include: as Required By Law; Public Health issues as required by law; Communicable Diseases; Health Oversight; Abuse or Neglect; Food or Drug Administration requirements; Legal proceedings; Law Enforcement; Coroners; Funeral Directors; Organ Donation; Research; Criminal Activity; Military Activity and National Security; Workers' Compensation; Inmates; Required Uses and Disclosures. Under the law, we must make disclosures to you and when required by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human services to investigate or determine our compliance with the requirements of Section 164.500.

Other Disclosures

Business Associates: These are some services provided in our organization through contracts with business associates. To protect your health information, however, we require the business associates to appropriately safeguard your information.

Notifications: We may use or disclose information to notify or assist in notifying a family member, personal representative, or another person responsible for your care, your location, and general condition. Health professionals, using their best judgment, may disclose to a family member, other relative, close personal friend or any other person you identify, health information relevant to that person's involvement in your care or payment related to your care. We will also use our professional judgment and our experience with common practice to make reasonable inferences of your best interest in allowing a person to pick up filled prescriptions, medical supplies, x-rays, or other similar forms of health information.

Workers Compensation: We may use or disclose your health information to the extent authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with laws relating to Workers Compensation or other similar programs established by law.

We reserve the right to change our practices and to make the new provisions effective for all protected health information we maintain. Should our information practices change, we will mail a revised notice to the address you've supplied us, or if you agree, we will e-mail the revised notice to you.