

# PATIENT PRIVACY PLAN FOR HIPAA

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**HIPAA** stands for the **H**ealth **I**nsurance **P**ortability and **A**ccountability **A**ct. This is a law that was passed by congress in 1996. It's intent was to ensure that people would always have health care coverage and that all their records would always be secured. There have been multiple modifications and new rules published many times since that date. Every medical facility and doctor's office is required to follow these Federal Guidelines under penalty of law. We all must require you to sign a similar form that states how we will keep your files safe and private at all times as of April 14, 2003. Thank you for bearing with this inconvenience that helps to protect you.

We are glad to inform you that we will have your records secured at all times. Only people in the office who are directly involved with your medical care will have any access at all. You are not required to give any information to anyone on the staff that you do not wish to share personal details with. Office assistants will have access to your chart for filing and billing purposes only. The fax machine IS a secure means of communication. Voice mail will be received by the office staff. Our medical assistant is trained to ask detailed health related questions so that we can serve you more efficiently and effectively. We do encourage you to share necessary information with her so that we can help you more quickly. Email and the internet are not private methods of contact. You can choose to disclose whatever you wish in these venues. We will try to answer your questions as discretely as we can.

You should tell us what address and phone number where you prefer us to reach you. You should decide if it is okay that we send mail or leave messages for you there under the name "Dr. Vanderlinde". (We can work out a code name if you prefer.)

All the companies that are part of your health care must also honor your wishes. All doctor's offices, hospital and billing services, dictation services that we do business with are all bound by this same Privacy Rule. They are also aware of strict confidentiality codes. They will be given only the minimal necessary information to complete their jobs. We can provide you an account of where your information has been sent if you would like. We will get your permission before discussing your case with any consulting specialty physicians or referring primary care doctors. No one can release any data on you without your permission.

We are not allowed to give out any information on you, written or verbal, without your expressed consent. We cannot share anything you say to us in confidence with anyone, unless you give us permission to do so. Some people will be angry with us that they cannot get information about you, and you will be inconvenienced at times when you must give me written permission to disclose things. We must have your direct authorization to give information to life insurance companies, pharmacies, your employer and even your family members. You always have the right to view your records and submit any amendments that you would like.

We have the full 12 page Law and the 93 page Final Rule published by the US Dept. of Health and Human Services available in the office for you to read, if you would like. These rules are all new to us and are difficult to interpret and follow. Please accept that we are acting in good faith and doing our best to comply. We will do our utmost to serve your privacy needs. Please do not hesitate to let us know what we can do for you! The Office HIPAA Privacy Manager is Lynn Benway. Please contact her if you have any questions.

I have read the above, understand it, and have had my questions answered.

Printed Name

Signature

Date