

Long Valley Health Center Notice of Privacy Practices

Effective 4/15/03

This notice describes how health information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can access this information. Please review this notice carefully. For more information, please contact:

Privacy Officer/Health Information Supervisor
Long Valley Health Center
Post Office Box 870
Laytonville, CA 95454
Phone: 707-984-6131 FAX: 707-984-6990
Website: www.longvalley.org

This notice describes the privacy practices of Long Valley Health Center including the practices of:

- ◆ all of our doctors, dentists, mid-levels, nurses and other health care professionals authorized to enter information about you into your health record.
- ◆ all of our departments including Health Information and Billing.
- ◆ all of our employees, staff, volunteers and other personnel who work for us or on our behalf.

We understand that health information about you and the health care you receive is personal. When you receive treatment and other services from us, a record is created. We need this record to provide you with quality care and to comply with legal requirements. This notice applies to all of our records about your care, whether made by our health care professionals or others working in this office.

This notice informs you of the ways in which we may use and disclose your personal health information. It also describes your rights with respect to the health information we keep about you as well as the obligations we must meet when we use and disclose your health information. It includes information on how you may file a complaint if you believe your privacy rights have been violated.

We are committed to protecting your personal health information. In compliance with the law, the attached Notice of Privacy Practices states:

- ◆ that we will make sure that health information that identifies you is kept private in accordance with relevant law.
- ◆ that we have the right to make changes in our privacy practices and this notice provided the changes are permitted by law.
- ◆ that we will give you this notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to your personal health information.
- ◆ that we will follow the terms of the policy that is currently in effect for all of your personal health information.

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We may use and disclose your personal health information for the following:

For Treatment: We may use health information about you to provide necessary treatment or services. We may disclose health information about you to the health care providers, technicians, and others who are involved in your care. They may work at Long Valley Health Center or at another doctor's office, hospital, lab, or pharmacy to whom we refer you for treatment, consultation, X-Rays, lab tests, prescriptions or other health care services. For example, we may disclose to an emergency room doctor that you are allergic to penicillin, as this may effect medication choices.

For Payment: We may use and disclose health information about you to bill and collect payment from you, your insurance company, including Medi-Cal and Medicare, or other third party. For example, if you have insurance, we may need to share information about your office visit with your health plan in order for your health plan to pay us or reimburse you for the visit. We may also tell your health plan about treatment you need in order to obtain their prior approval or to determine whether your plan will cover the treatment.

For Health Care Operations: We may use and disclose health information about you for our day-to-day operations. These uses and disclosures are necessary to run Long Valley Health Center and to make sure that all of our patients receive quality care. For example, we may use health information to review the services we provide and to evaluate the performance of our staff in caring for you. We may also combine health information about our patients with health information from other health care providers to decide what additional services we should offer, what services are not needed, whether new treatments are effective or to compare how we are doing with others and to see where we can make improvements. We will remove identifying information from this so it may be used to study health care delivery without identifying our patients.

Appointment Reminders: We may use health information about you to contact you as a reminder that you have an appointment at the Health Center.

Health-related services and treatment alternatives: We may use and disclose health information to inform you of health-related services or recommend treatment options or alternatives that may be of interest to you. Please let us know if you do not wish us to contact you with this information, or if you wish to have us use a different address.

Research: Under certain circumstances, we may use and disclose health information about you for research purposes. All research projects are subject to a special approval board that has reviewed the research proposal and established protocols to ensure the privacy of the health information.

Organ and Tissue Donation: If you are an organ donor, we may disclose health information about you to organizations that handle procurement, transplantation or donation as necessary to facilitate organ or tissue donation and transplantation.

Military and veterans: If you are a member of the armed forces or separated/discharged from military service, we may release health information as required by military command authorities or the Department of Veterans Affairs as may be applicable. We may also release health information about foreign military personnel to the appropriate foreign military authorities.

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Workers' Compensation: We may release health information as required by law for workers' compensation or similar programs.

As Required by Law: We may disclose health information about you to law enforcement and other government agencies to support government audits and inspections, to facilitate investigations and to comply with government-mandated reporting when required to do so by federal, state or local law.

Public Health Activities: We may disclose health information about you to Public Health agencies as required by law. For example, we are required to report certain communicable diseases to the state's public health department.

Lawsuits and Disputes: We may disclose health information in response to a court or administrative order, in response to a subpoena, discovery request or other lawful process not accompanied by a court or administrative order but only after efforts have been made to inform you of the request or to obtain an order protecting the information requested.

Coroners/Health Examiners: We may release health information to a coroner/health examiner as required by law.

Health Oversight Activities: We may disclose health information to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law, i.e., audits, investigations, inspections and licensure necessary for the government to monitor health care programs and compliance with civil rights laws.

Inmates: If you are an inmate of a correctional institution or under the custody of law enforcement officials, we may release health information about you to the correctional institution or law enforcement official as required by law.

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Your Rights: You have certain rights with respect to your personal health information. This section describes your rights and how to exercise them:

Right to Inspect and Copy: You may inspect and/or receive a copy of your personal health information as permitted by state and federal law. This does not include psychotherapy notes, although we may, at your request and upon payment of the applicable fee, provide you with a summary of these notes.

To view or inspect your personal health information, you must make an appointment for this purpose with your primary provider. To receive a copy of your personal health information, you must submit your request in writing to our Privacy Officer. We may charge a fee for the copying, mailing and any other costs associated with your request. Our policy is to only release information produced by Health Center staff. With only certain exceptions (i.e., X-Ray or lab reports), requests for information produced by other providers/agencies involved in your health care must be requested from that agency.

In very limited circumstances, we may deny your request to inspect and/or receive a copy of your personal health information. If denied, you may request the denial be reviewed. We will designate a licensed health care professional to review this denial. The person conducting the review will not be the same person who denied your request. We will comply with the outcome of this review. Certain denials such as those relating to psychotherapy notes will not be reviewed.

Right to Amend: If you feel that the health information we maintain about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may request an amendment of this information. To request an amendment your request must be made in writing and submitted to our Privacy Officer. This must be contained on one piece of paper legibly written or typed. In addition, you must provide a reason that supports your request for an amendment.

We may deny your request if it is not in writing or does not include a reason to support the request. In addition, we may deny your request if you ask us to amend information that:

- was not created by us, unless the person or organization that created the information is no longer available to make the amendment.
- is not part of the health information kept by or for the Health Center
- is not part of information you would be permitted to inspect and copy.
- is to our knowledge accurate and complete.

List of Disclosures: To request an accounting of disclosures, you must submit your request in writing to our Privacy Officer. Your request must state a time period of not more than six (6) years and may not include dates before 04/15/03. The first list you request within a twelve (12) month period will be free. For additional lists, we may charge you for the costs of providing the list. We will notify you of the cost and you may choose to withdraw or modify your request before costs are incurred. We will mail you a list of disclosures within thirty (30) days or notify you if we are unable to supply the list within that time period and by what date we can supply the list. This date will not exceed sixty (60) days from the date you made the request.

Right to Request Restrictions: You may request a restriction/limitation on the health information we use or disclose about you for treatment, payment or health care operations. You may request a limit on the health information we disclose about you to someone who is involved in your care or the payment for your care, such as a family member or friend.

We may deny your request for restrictions, if it is not feasible for us to comply with your

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request or if we believe that it will negatively impact our ability to care for you. If we do agree, however, we will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide emergency treatment or disclosure is required by law. To request a restriction, you must make your request in writing to our Privacy Officer. In your request, you must tell us what information you want to limit and to whom you want the limits to apply.

Right to Receive Confidential Communications: You may request that we communicate with you about health matters in a certain way, such as only contacting you at work or by mail at a specified address. You must make your request in writing to our Privacy Officer. Your request must specify how or where you wish to be contacted. We will accommodate all reasonable requests.

Right to a Paper Copy of This Notice: You have the right to receive another copy of this notice at any time. To receive a copy, please request it from our Privacy Officer. You may also obtain a copy of this notice at our website at: www.longvalley.org.

Changes to this notice: In order to comply with changes in state and federal law, we may have to change this notice and to make the changed notice effective for all of the health information that we maintain about you, whether it is information that we previously received about you, or information we may receive about you in the future. We will post a copy of our current notice in our facility. Our notice will indicate the effective date on the top right-hand corner of each page. We will also give you a copy of our current notice upon request.

Complaints: If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with us or with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. You may file a complaint by mailing, faxing or E-mailing us a written description of your complaint or by telling us about your complaint in person or over the telephone. Please describe what happened and give us the dates and names of everyone involved. Please also give us contact information, so we may respond to your complaint. You will not be penalized for filing a complaint. Please address your complaints to:

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Other Uses and Disclosures of Your Protected Health Information:

Other uses and disclosures of personal health information not covered by this notice or applicable law will be made only with your written authorization. If you give us your written authorization to use or disclose your personal health information, you may revoke your authorization, in writing at any time. If you revoke your authorization, we will no longer use or disclose your personal health information for the reasons covered in your written authorization. You understand we are unable to take back any uses and/or disclosures that have already been made with your authorization and we are required to retain our records of the care that we have provided to you.

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_____ **PATIENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT
OF NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES**

Medical Record Number: _____

Patient Name: _____

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Notice of Privacy Practices for the above patient.

Signature

Relationship to patient

Date _____

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Documentation of Acknowledgment Not Obtained

To be completed by the Health Center when a patient's signed acknowledgment concerning the Health Center's Notice of Privacy practices is not obtained.

Patient name: _____

Date of first visit: _____ Location: _____

How was a copy of the Health Center's Notice of Privacy Practices Provided?

- Patient received a paper copy at the time of the first visit.
- A paper copy was sent to the patient by mail prior to the first visit.
- An electronic copy was sent to patient by E-mail prior to first visit.

Describe the good faith efforts made to obtain the patient's signed Acknowledgment of Receipt:

- Patient was asked to sign the Acknowledgment of Receipt and counseled on our obligation to provide the notice and obtain a signed acknowledgment.
- Other:

Describe the reasons why a signed Acknowledgment of Receipt was not obtained:

- Patient is unwilling or refuses to sign.
- Other:

Signature/Title of Department

Date

Maintain this form and any attachments with the Health Center's Privacy Rule compliance program documentation for at least six (6) years or as required by the Health Center's policies and procedures or the Privacy rule.