

**Barnes Chiropractic Health & Fitness 2013
Notice of Patients Rights and Privacy Protections under
Federal Privacy Laws (HIPAA)**

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 2013, commonly referred to as HIPAA, requires this office to implement and maintain a number of policies and safeguards to insure that patients' protected health information (PHI) remains secure and only used in a manner consistent with HIPAA and similar laws.

General Rules and Definitions.

Protected Health Information, also referred to as PHI means any patiently identifiable health information, including demographic data, which relates to:

- the patient's past, present or future physical or mental health or condition,
- the provision of health care to the patient, or
- the past, present, or future payment for the provision of health care to the patient,

and identifies the patient or for which there is a reasonable basis to believe it can be used to identify the patient. Patiently identifiable health information includes many common identifiers (e.g., name, address, birth date, Social Security Number).

Covered Entity means: a) any health care provider, including this office, b) Health Plans, such as a health insurance company, an HMO, government health programs such as Medicare and Medicaid, c) a health care clearing house that processes nonstandard health information from one covered entity into a standard format, such as a billing agent.

Minimum Necessary. A central aspect of HIPAA is the principle of "minimum necessary" use and disclosure. This office will make reasonable efforts to use, disclose, and request only the minimum amount of protected health information needed to accomplish the intended purpose of the use, disclosure, or request. This office will develop and implement policies and procedures to reasonably limit uses and disclosures to the minimum necessary. When the minimum necessary standard applies to a use or disclosure, this office will not use, disclose, or request the entire medical record for a particular purpose, unless it can specifically justify the whole record as the amount reasonably needed for the purpose.

The minimum necessary requirement is not imposed in any of the following circumstances: (a) disclosure to or a request by a health care provider for treatment; (b) disclosure to an patient who is the subject of the information, or the patient's personal representative; (c) use or disclosure made pursuant to an authorization; (d) disclosure to HHS for complaint investigation, compliance review or enforcement; (e) use or disclosure that is required by law; or (f) use or disclosure required for compliance with the HIPAA Transactions Rule or other HIPAA Administrative Simplification Rules.

For the purposes of the minimum necessary requirement, the following employees/positions have the corresponding access to PHI:

Doctor or other health care provider who treats or directs treatment of patients: All PHI related to the patient under the doctor's care, or as the office's electronic billing/records system permits, necessary to diagnose, treat and perform other healthcare operations

Chiropractic Assistant or Chiropractic Technical Assistant (as certified by the state or Integrity Management): All PHI related to the patient under the doctor's care, or as

the office's billing/electronic records system permits necessary to treat and perform other healthcare operations.

Billing: All PHI as is minimally necessary to perform the duties of billing or obtain prior authorization of services, including, but not limited to, demographic information and doctor's notes, patients' medical history or as the office's electronic billing/records system permits.

Front Desk/Receptionist: All PHI as is minimally necessary to schedule appointments for patients and process patient's demographic and billing information or as the office's electronic billing/records system permits. This may include patients' demographic information, health care payer information, and statements made by the patient regarding their current or past medical condition.

Practice Representative: All PHI as is minimally necessary to schedule appointments for patients or as the office's electronic billing/records system permits.

We recognize that our office may have employees covering several positions on a temporary or permanent basis. Therefore the level of access to PHI shall be as necessary to perform the functions of the position.

Business Associate: In general, a Business Associate is defined by HIPAA as a person or organization, other than a member of a covered entity's workforce, that performs certain functions or activities on behalf of, or provides certain services to, a covered entity that involve the use or disclosure of patiently identifiable health information. Business associate functions or activities on behalf of a covered entity include claims processing, data analysis, utilization review, and billing. Business Associate services to a covered entity are limited to legal, actuarial, accounting, consulting, data aggregation, management, administrative, accreditation, or financial services. *However, persons or organizations are not considered business associates if their functions or services do not involve the use or disclosure of protected health information, and where any access to protected health information by such persons would be incidental, if at all.* A covered entity can be the business associate of another covered entity.

Personal Representatives. HIPAA requires a this office to treat a "personal representative" the same as the patient, with respect to uses and disclosures of the patient's protected health information, as well as the patient's rights under the Rule.⁸⁴ A personal representative is defined by HIPAA as a person legally authorized to make health care decisions on an patient's behalf or to act for a deceased patient or the estate. HIPAA permits an exception when we has a reasonable belief that the personal representative may be abusing or neglecting the patient, or that treating the person as the personal representative could otherwise endanger the patient.

Special Case: Minors. In most cases, parents are the personal representatives for their minor children. Therefore, in most cases, parents can exercise patient rights, such as access to the medical record, on behalf of their minor children. In certain exceptional cases, the parent is not considered the personal representative. In these situations, HIPAA defers to State and other law to determine the rights of parents to access and control the protected health information of their minor children. If State and other law is silent concerning parental access to the minor's protected health information, our office has discretion to provide or deny a parent access to the minor's health information, provided the decision is made by a licensed health care professional, such as our doctor, in the exercise of professional judgment.

