

## NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

### Crusaders Central Clinic Association Notice of Privacy Practices

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

This Notice of Privacy Practices describes how we may use and disclose your protected health information to carry out treatment, payment or health care operations and for other purposes that are permitted or required by law. It also describes your rights to access and control your protected health information. "Protected health information" is information about you, including demographic information, that may identify you and that related to your past, present or future physical or mental health or condition and related health care services.

We are required to abide by the terms of this Notice of Privacy Practices. We may change the terms of our notice, at any time. The new notice will be effective for all protected health information that we maintain at that time. Upon your request, we will provide you with any revised Notice of Privacy practices by (accessing our website at [crusaderclinic.org](http://crusaderclinic.org)), calling the office and requesting that your revised copy be sent to you in the mail or asking for one at the time of your next appointment.

#### 1. Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information

##### Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information Based Upon Your Written Consent

You will be asked by your provider to sign a consent to treatment form. Once you have consented to use and disclosure of your protected health information for treatment, payment and health care operations by signing the consent form, your provider and our staff will use or disclose your protected health information as described in this Section 1. Your protected health information may be used and disclosed by your provider, our office staff and others outside of our office that are involved in your care and treatment for the purpose of providing health care services to you. Your protected health information may also be used and disclosed to pay your health care bills and to support the operation of the provider's practice.

The following are examples of the types of uses and disclosures of your protected health care information that the provider's office is permitted to make once you have signed our consent to treatment form. These examples are not meant to be exhaustive, but to describe the types of uses and disclosures that may be made by our office once you have provided consent. PHI may be used to prepare a prescription and/or be transmitted to a third party for claims processing. Your patient information may be given to a Pharmaceutical manufacturer(s) or their agent(s) and/or used by organizations in the process of obtaining medication through the Patient Assistance Programs (PAP).

**Treatment:** We will use and disclose your protected health information to provide, coordinate, or manage your health care and any related services. For example, we may disclose protected health information to doctors, nurses, technicians, or other personnel, including people outside our office, who are involved in your medical care and need the information to provide you with

medical care.

This would include another provider or health care provider (e.g. a specialist or laboratory) who, at the request of your provider, becomes involved in your care by providing assistance with your health care diagnosis or treatment to your provider.

**Payment:** your protected health information will be used, as needed, to bill and obtain payment for your health care services from you, an insurance company, health plan, or similar third party. This may include certain activities that your health insurance plan may undertake before it approves or pays for the health care services we recommend for you such as, making a determination of eligibility or coverage for insurance benefits, reviewing services provided to you for medical necessity, and undertaking utilization review activities. For example, obtaining approval for a hospital stay may require that your relevant protected health information be disclosed to the health plan to obtain approval for the hospital admission.

**Healthcare Operations:** We may use or disclose, as needed, your protected health information in order to support the business activities of our office. These activities include, but are not limited to, quality assessment activities, employee review activities, and other uses and disclosures necessary to make sure that all of our patients receive quality care and to operate and manage our office.

We may use or disclose your protected health information, as necessary, to provide you with information about treatment alternatives or other health related benefits and services that may be of interest to you. We may also send you information about products or services that we believe may be beneficial to you. You may contact our Privacy Contact to request that these materials be sent to you.

We may use or disclose your demographic information, in order to contact you for fundraising activities supported by our office. You have the right to choose not to receive any fundraising communications. If you do not want to receive these materials, please contact our Privacy Contact and request that these fundraising materials not be sent to you.

## **2. Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information Based upon Your Written Authorization**

The following uses and disclosures of your protected health information will be made only with your written authorization:

1. Uses and disclosures of protected health information for marketing purposes; and
2. Disclosures that constitute a sale of your protected health information

In addition, most uses and disclosures of psychotherapy notes will require 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 below. You may revoke this authorization, at any time, by submitting a written revocation to our Privacy Officer and we will no longer disclose protected health information under the authorization. But disclosure that we made in reliance on your authorization before you revoked it will not be affected by the revocation.

### **3. Uses and Disclosures That Require Us to Provide You an Opportunity to Object.**

We may use and disclose your protected health information in the following instances. You have the opportunity to agree or object to the use or disclosure of all or part of your protected health information. If you are not present or able to agree or object to the use or disclosure of the protected health information, then your provider may, using professional judgment, determine whether the disclosure is in your best interest. In this case, only the protected health information that is relevant to your health care will be disclosed.

**Others Involved in Your Healthcare:** Unless you object, we may disclose to a member of your family, a relative, a close friend or any other person you identify, your protected health information that directly relates to that person's involvement in your health care. If you are unable to agree or 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. We may use or disclose protected health information to notify or assist in notifying a family member, personal representative or any other person that is responsible for your care and your location, general condition or death.

**Disaster Relief:** We may use or disclose your protected health information to an authorized public or private entity to assist in disaster relief efforts and to coordinate uses and disclosures to family or other individuals involved in your health care.

### **4. SPECIAL SITUATIONS: Uses and Disclosures That may Be Made Without Your Consent, Authorization or Opportunity to Object**

We may use or disclose your protected health information in the following situations without your consent or authorization. These situations include:

**Required By Law:** We may use or disclose your protected health information to the extent that the use or disclosure is required by law. The 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, as required by law, of any such uses or disclosures.

**Public Health: Risks:** We may disclose protected health information for public health activities. These activities generally include disclosures to prevent or control disease, injury or disability; report births and deaths; report child abuse or neglect; report reactions to medications or problems with products; notify people of recalls of products they may be using; a person who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk for contracting or spreading a disease or condition; and the appropriate government authority if we believe a patient has been the victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence. We will only make this disclosure if you agree or when required or authorized by law

**Health Oversight Activities:** We may disclose protected health information to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law, such as audits, investigations, and inspections. Oversight agencies seeking this information include government agencies that oversee the health care system, government benefit programs, other government regulatory programs and civil rights laws.

**Data Breach Notification Purposes.** We may use or disclose your Protected Health

Information to provide legally required notices of unauthorized access to or disclosure of your health information.

**Business Associates:** We may disclose protected health information to our business associates that perform functions on our behalf or provide us with services if the information is necessary for such functions or services. For example, we may use another company to perform billing services on our behalf. All of our business associates are obligated to protect the privacy of your information and are not allowed to use or disclose any information other than as specified in our contract.

**Legal Proceedings:** We may disclose protected health information in the course of any judicial or administrative proceeding, in response to any order of a court or administrative tribunal (to the extent such disclosure is expressly authorized), in certain conditions in response to a subpoena, discovery request or other lawful process.

**Law Enforcement:** We may also disclose protected health information, so long as applicable legal requirements are met, for law enforcement purposes. These law enforcement purposes include (1) legal processes and otherwise required by law, (2) limited information requests for identification and location purposes, (3) pertaining to victims of a crime, (4) suspicion that death has occurred as a result of criminal conduct, (5) in the event that a crime occurs on the premises of the practice, and (6) medical emergency (not in the Practice's premises) and it is likely that a crime has occurred.

**Coroners, Funeral Directors, and Organ Donation:** We may disclose protected health information to a coroner or medical examiner for identification purposes, determining cause of death or for the coroner or medical examiner to perform other duties authorized by law. We may also disclose protected health information to a funeral director, as authorized by law, in order to permit the funeral director to carry out their duties. We may disclose such information in reasonable anticipation of death. Protected health information may be used and disclosed for cadaveric organ, eye or tissue donation purposes.

**To Avert a Serious Threat to Health or Safety:** Consistent with applicable federal and state laws, we may disclose your protected health information, if we believe that the use or disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public. Disclosures, however, will be made only to someone who may be able to help prevent the threat.

**Military Activity and National Security:** When the appropriate conditions apply, we may use or disclose 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.

**Worker's Compensation:** Your protected health information may be disclosed by us as authorized to comply with workers' compensation laws and other similar legally established

programs.

**Inmates:** We may use or disclose your protected health information if you are an inmate of a correctional facility and your provider created or received your protected health information in the course of providing care to you.

**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 et. seq.

## **5. Your Rights**

Following is a statement of your rights with respect to your protected health information and a brief description of how you may exercise these rights.

**You have the right 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 your provider and the practice uses for making decisions about you.

Under federal law, however, you may not inspect or copy the following records; psychotherapy notes; information compiled in reasonable anticipation of, or use in, a civil, criminal, or administrative action or proceeding, and protected health information that is subject to law that prohibits access to protected health information. Depending on the circumstances, a decision to deny access may be reviewable. In some circumstances, you may have a right to have this decision reviewed. Please contact our Privacy Contact if you have questions about access to your medical record.

**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 health care 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.

Your provider is not required to agree to a restriction that you may request. If your provider believes it is in your best interest to permit use and disclosure of your protected health information, your protected health information will not be restricted. If your provider does agree to the requested restriction, we may not use or disclose your protected health information in violation of that restriction unless it is needed to provide emergency treatment. With this in mind, please discuss any restriction you wish to request with your provider. You may request a restriction by **requesting and completing the Restriction of Protected Health Information Form. This form should be turned in to the registration area by mail or in person. The Clinic has the right to accept or refuse the request.**

**You have the right to request to receive confidential communications from us by alternative means or at an alternative location.** We will accommodate reasonable requests.

We may also condition this accommodation by asking you for information as to how payment will be handled or specification of an alternative address or other method of contact. We will not request an explanation from you as to the basis for the request. Please make this request in writing to our Privacy Contact.

**You may have the right to have your provider amend your protected health information.**

This means you may request an amendment of protected health information about you in a designated record set for as long as we maintain this information. In certain cases, we may deny your request for an amendment. If we deny your request for amendment, you have the right to file a statement of disagreement with us and we may prepare a rebuttal to your statement and will provide you with a copy of any such rebuttal. Please contact our Privacy Contact to determine if you have questions about amending your medical record.

**You have the right to receive an accounting of certain disclosures we have made, if any, of your protected health information.** This right applies to disclosures for purposes other than treatment, payment or healthcare operations as described in this Notice of Privacy Practices. It excludes disclosures we may have made to you for a facility directory, to family members or friends involved in your care, or for notification purposes. You have the right to receive specific information regarding these disclosures that occurred after April 14, 2003. You may request a shorter timeframe. The right to receive this information is subject to certain exceptions, restrictions and limitations.

**You have the right to obtain a paper copy of this notice from us,** upon request, even if you have agreed to accept this notice electronically.

**Right to Get Notice of a Breach.** You have the right to be notified upon a breach of any of your unsecured Protected Health Information.

**Out-of-Pocket-Payments.** If you paid out-of-pocket (or in other words, you have requested that we not bill your health plan) in full for a specific item or service, you have the right to ask that your protected health information with respect to that item or service not be disclosed to a health plan for purposes of payment or health care operations, and we will honor that request.

## **6. Complaints**

You may complain to us or to the Secretary of Health and Human Services if you believe your privacy rights have been violated by us. You may file a complaint with us by notifying our privacy contact of your complaint. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

You may contact our Privacy Contact, at **(815) 490-1603** or [privacyofficer@crusaderhealth.org](mailto:privacyofficer@crusaderhealth.org) for further information about the complaint process.

This notice was published and becomes effective on **April 1, 2003.**