



NOTICE REGARDING THE MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION OF PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION

Recently the US government established new rules concerning the use & protection of medical & health information. Life Management Center (LMC) has always worked very hard to protect the confidentiality of your records. This notice describes how health information that we keep about you may be used and disclosed, and how you can get access to this information.

Please review it carefully.

I. Our Duties As They Relate to Your Protected Health Information (PHI).

Any information that we keep about you, whether written, oral or electronic is protected by federal and state laws. We have a duty to safeguard your Protected Health Information (PHI) which includes individually identifiable information about:

- your past, present, or future health or condition,
- provision of health care services to you,
- payment for the health care considered PHI

In addition to protecting your privacy, we are also required to:

- give you this Notice which describes our privacy practices, and
- explain how, when and why we may use or give out (disclose) your PHI

Except in very specific circumstances, we must use or disclose only the minimum PHI that is necessary to accomplish the reason for the use or disclosure.

We must follow the privacy practices described in this Notice; however, **we reserve the right to change the terms of this Notice at any time and to make the new notice provisions effective for all protected health information that we receive, disclose or maintain.** Should our Notice change, we will post a new Notice in all of our reception areas. You will also find our Privacy Notice on our website at:

www.lifemanagementcenter.org

How LMC Uses your Protected Information:

At LMC, psychiatrists, therapists, nursing, case management and other professional staff work together to provide mental health services. We record this information and include it in your clinical record. The information in the record also serves as the basis for obtaining payment for services we provide to you.

Everyone who works for LMC is required to protect the privacy of your records as a condition for working here. Life Management Center takes necessary precautions against the inappropriate uses & disclosure of information. All of our staff are expected to access your information only when necessary. Generally, staff use of your information for the following reasons:

- For Treatment:

We use and disclose your PHI to provide, coordinate or manage your care. For example, a therapist or case manager may share your PHI with a supervisor, psychiatrist or other staff who are involved with providing your care. We may also provide PHI to other medical providers, such as a laboratory to do blood work, or a pharmacist to assist with your care and who also have an obligation to protect your information. We may also use your information to notify you of upcoming appointments.

- **To Obtain Payment:**

We use your PHI to create bills and collect payment from insurance companies, Medicaid, and other payers. For example, we may use information about dates, type of service, or diagnosis, to show that we provided services to you in order to be paid for your care.

- **For Health Care Operations:**

We use and disclose your PHI in order to operate our programs and provide services. For example, we may use your PHI in evaluating the quality of services provided, or share PHI with our accountant for audit purposes, our attorney for legal purposes, or other business associates in the operation of our business. Business associates are required to sign an agreement to abide by our privacy requirements.

Federal Law & State Law

Both the federal government and the State of Florida have regulations about how to protect your privacy. When these laws differ, we will follow the regulations that provide you with the most privacy protection.

How We Share Your Information Outside of Life Management Center:

Uses and Disclosures For Which We Require Your Authorization (or your legal representative's authorization):

In most cases, Florida Law requires us to obtain written permission before we can release information about you for other people or businesses to use. For example:

- **For Payment:**

To release information to insurance companies in order to obtain payment from them for your care.

- **For Treatment:**

To provide records to a hospital, another doctor, therapist, or other service provider not connected with Life Management Center.

- **Other Health Care Operations:**

When the use or disclosure goes beyond internal health care operations, we are required to have a written authorization.

Authorizations can be revoked by you at any time to stop future uses or disclosures, except where we have already used or disclosed your PHI in reliance upon your authorization.

Uses and Disclosures For Which We Do Not Require Authorization:

Under less common circumstances Federal regulations and/or Florida laws permit or require LMC to share information outside of Life Management Center without your authorization. Again, when these disclosures are authorized, LMC must only provide the minimum amount of information necessary to achieve the purpose. The following are situations when we do not require your authorization:

- **To Avert a Serious Threat of Harm**

LMC uses and discloses protected information to alert those able to lessen or prevent the threat of serious harm to your health and safety or to the health and safety of another person or to the public.

- **Relating to a client who has died:**

LMC may disclose PHI related to an individual's death to a coroner, medical examiner or funeral director for them to perform their job duties.

- **For Public Health Activities:**

LMC may disclose PHI when we are required to collect information about diseases, injuries, or to report vital statistics, adverse medication reactions, and certain communicable disease to a public health authority.

- For health oversight activities:

LMC may need to disclose PHI to the Florida Agency for Healthcare Administration, the Department of Health, the Department Children & Families, the Board of Medicine Florida Advocacy Council, or the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities during monitoring, & licensing inspections and to demonstrate regulatory compliance.

- For research purposes:

In certain circumstances, we may disclose PHI for research purposes.

- For specialized government functions:

LMC may release PHI when a client is committed to, or is to be returned to, the Department of Corrections from the Department of Children and Family Services, and the Department of Corrections requests such records. LMC may provide PHI to authorized federal officials for national security reasons such as providing protection for the President of the United States.

- For workers' compensation:

We may disclose PHI to comply with workers' compensation laws.

- To Comply with Other Provisions of Law

LMC must comply with the valid order of a court to release protected information.

LMC must also disclose PHI to authorities who monitor our compliance with these privacy requirements.

LMC must furnish records relating to a Medicaid recipient to the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit in the Department of Legal Affairs, upon request.

Uses or Disclosures For Which You Must Be Given An Opportunity To Object:

Sometimes we may disclose your PHI if we have told you that we are going to use or disclose your information and you did not object.

For example, unless you provide us with alternative instructions, we may send appointment reminders or billing statements to your home.

II. Your Rights As They Relate to Your Protected Health Information (PHI).

You have the following rights relating to your PHI:

- To request restrictions on uses or disclosures:

You have the right to ask that we limit how we use or disclose your PHI. We will consider your request, but are not legally bound to agree to the restriction. To the extent that we do agree to any restrictions on our use or disclosure of your PHI, we will put the agreement in writing and abide by it except in emergency situations. We cannot agree to limit uses or disclosures that are required by law.

- To choose how we contact you:

You have the right to ask that we send you information at an alternative address or by an alternative means. We must agree to your request as long as it is reasonably easy for us to do so.

You have the right:

- To inspect and copy your PHI:

Unless your access is restricted for clear and documented reasons, you have a right to see your protected health information if you put your request in writing. We will respond to your request within 30 days for PHI we keep on-site, within 60 days for PHI that is not kept on-site.

If we deny you access, we will give you written reasons for the denial and explain any right to have the denial reviewed. If you want copies of your PHI, a charge for copying may be imposed.

- To request amendment of your PHI:

If you believe that there is a mistake or missing information in our record of your PHI, you may request, in writing, that we correct or add to the record. We will respond within 60 days of receiving your request. We may deny the request if we determine that the PHI is:

- (i) correct and complete;
- (ii) not created by us or not part of our records; or,
- (iii) not permitted to be disclosed.

If we approve the request for amendment, we will change the PHI and inform you, as well as tell others who need to know about the change in the PHI.

A denial will state the reasons for denial. It will also explain your rights to have your request, our denial, and any statement in response that you provide, added to your PHI.

- To find out what disclosures have been made:

You have a right to get a listing of certain disclosures that we have made. The report will identify when, what, why, and to whom the information was given. The report may not include instances of disclosure that were made for treatment, payment, or health care operations, disclosures that you authorized, or if information was accessed for national security or intelligence purposes, law enforcement, or health oversight activities. (LMC is not required to include in the list any disclosures made before April 14, 2003.)

We will respond to your written request for such a list within 60 days of receiving it. Your request can relate to disclosures going as far back as six years. There will be no charge for up to one such list each year. There may be a charge for more frequent requests.

You have the right:

- To receive a paper or electronic copy of this notice upon request. You may request a copy of this notice from the receptionist. The notice is also available on our website at www.lifemanagementcenter.org

III. How to Get More Information or Complain about our Privacy Practices.

If you have questions about this Notice, or need additional information, please contact the Life Management Center Privacy/Compliance Officer at the following address:

525 E. Fifteenth St
Panama City, FL 32405
850-522-4485 Extension # 1110
swilkie@lifemanagementcenter.org

If you think we may have violated your privacy rights, or you disagree with a decision we made about access to your PHI, you may file a complaint with the person listed above.

We may not retaliate against you if you make a complaint.

IV. Other Contact Information:

You also may file a written complaint with:

US Department of Health and Human Services
Attention: Office for Civil Rights
Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center
Suite 3B70, 61 Forsyth Street SW
Atlanta, Georgia 32303-8909

Effective Date. This Notice is effective on April 14, 2003.