

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. THE PRIVACY OF YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION IS IMPORANT TO US.

Our responsibilities to safeguard your protected health information.

We are required by law to provide you with this notice about the hospital's privacy practices that explains how, when, and why we use and disclose your protected health information. With some exceptions, we may not use or disclose any more than the minimum necessary protected health information to accomplish the purpose of the use or disclosure. We are legally required to follow the privacy practices that are described in this notice.

However, we reserve the right to change the terms of this notice and our privacy policies at any time. Any changes will apply to the protected health information we already have. Before we make an important change to our policies, we will promptly change this notice and post a new notice in the hospital's main reception area. You can also request a copy of this notice from the Health Information Management Services at the address listed below.

USES AND DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION

We use and disclose health information about you for treatment, payment and healthcare operations. For example:

For Treatment: We may use or disclose medical information about you to provide your referring physician or another healthcare provider with information needed for your treatment or services.

For Payment: We may use and disclose medical information about you so that the treatment and services you receive may be filed to and payment may be collected from you, an insurance company or a third party.

Appointment Reminders: We may use and disclose medical information to contact you as a reminder that you have an appointment for medical care.

Treatment and/or Imaging Alternatives: We may use and disclose medical information to your referring physician to recommend possible treatment/imaging options or alternatives.

Individuals Involved in your care of Payment for you care: We may disclose medical information about you to a friend or family member who is involved in your medical care. We may also send information to someone who helps pay for your care.

As required by law: We will disclose medical information about you when required to do so by federal, state, or local law.

To Advert a Serious threat to Health or Safety: We may use and disclose medical information about you when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of the public or another person. Any disclosure, however, would only be to someone able to help prevent the threat.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Military and Veterans: If you are a member of the armed forces, we may release medical information about you as required by military command authorities. We may also release medical information about foreign military authority.

Workers' Compensation: We may release medical information about you for workers' compensation or similar programs. These programs provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness. The release of such information is controlled by state and/or federal law.

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

Lawsuits and Disputes: If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose medical information about you in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process by someone else involved in the dispute.

National Security and Intelligence Activities: We may release medical information about you to authorized federal officials for intelligence, counterintelligence, and other national security activities authorized by law.

Protective Services for the President and others: We may disclose medical information about you to authorized federal officials so they may provide protection to the President, other authorized person or foreign heads of state or conduct special investigations.

Inmates: If you are an inmate of a correctional institution or under the custody of a law enforcement official, we may release medical information about you to the correctional institution or law enforcement official. This release would be necessary (1) for this practice to provide you with health care; (2) to protect your health and safety or the health and safety of others; or (3) for the safety and security of the correctional institution.

YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU.

You have the following rights regarding medical information we maintain about you:

Right to Inspect and Copy: You have the right to inspect and copy medical information that may be used to make decisions about your care. Usually, this includes medical and billing records, but does not include psychotherapy notes.

To inspect and copy medical information that may be used to make decisions about you, you must submit your request to the Health Information Management Services.

Right to Amend: If you feel that medical information we have about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information. You have the right to request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by our facility.

To request an amendment, your request must be in writing and submitted to the Compliance Officer. In addition, you must provide a reason that supports your request.

We may deny your request for an amendment 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 entity that created the information is no longer available to make the amendment;
- Is not part of the information which you would be permitted to inspect a copy; or
- Is accurate and complete.

Rights to an Accounting of Disclosures: You have the right to request an "accounting of disclosures." This is a list of the disclosures we made of medical information about you.

To request this list or accounting of disclosures, you must submit your request in writing to the Health Information Management Services. Your request must state a time period which may not be longer than six (6) years and may not include dates before April 14, 2003. Your request should indicate in what form you want the list. (For example, on paper or electronically, i.e. on disk or by e-mail.) This first list you request within a twelve (12) month period will be free. We will notify you of the cost involved and you may choose to withdraw or modify your request at that time before any costs are incurred.

Right to Request Restrictions: You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the medical information we use or disclose about you for treatment, payment or health care operations. You also have the right to request a limit on the medical information we disclose about you to someone who is involved in your care or the payment for your care, like a family member or friend. For example, you could ask that we not use or disclose information about a surgery you had.

We are not required to agree to your request. If we do agree, we will comply unless the information is needed to provide you with emergency treatment.

To request restrictions, you must make your request in writing to the Health Information Management Services. In your request restrictions, you must tell us

- (1) What information you want to limit;
- (2) whether you want to limit our use, disclosure or both; and
- (3) to whom you want the limits to apply; for example, disclosures to your spouse.

Right to Request Confidential Communications by Alternative Means: You have the right to request that we communicate with you in certain ways. We will accommodate reasonable requests. We may 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 require you to provide an explanation for your request. Requests must be made in writing to our Privacy Officer

Right to a Copy of this Notice: You have the right to a copy of this notice. You may ask us to give you a copy of this notice at any time.

CHANGES TO THIS NOTICE: We reserve the right to change this notice. We reserve the right to make the revised or changed notice effective for medical information we already have about you as well as any information we receive in the future. We will post a copy of the current notice in our office. The notice will contain on the first page, in the upper right-hand corner, the effective date. In addition, each time you are in our office for health care services, we will offer you a copy of the current notice in effect.

COMPLAINTS: If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with the hospital or with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. To file a complaint with the hospital, contact the hospital's Privacy Officer at 970-247-3537 or fax 970-385-2355. All complaints must be in writing to:

Animas Surgical Hospital
Attn: Privacy Officer
575 Rivergate Lane
Durango, CO 81301

OTHER USES OF MEDICAL INFORMATION: Other uses and disclosures of medical information not covered by this notice or the laws that apply to us will be made only with your written permission. If you provide us permission to use or disclose medical

information about you, you may revoke that permission, in writing, at any time. If you revoke your permission, we will no longer use or disclose medical information about you for the reasons covered by your written authorization. You understand that we are unable to take back any disclosures we have already made with your permission, and that we are required to retain our records of the care that we provide to you.

RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION OF MEDICAL INFORMATION: We retain medical information in accordance with state and federal guidelines. Records will be kept for a minimum of ten (10) years, or, in the case of a minor, ten (10) years after their eighteenth (18th) birthday. Prior to destruction, a notice of intent to destroy will be placed in the local newspaper.