



Ancera Psychology Associates, PC
1101 5th Street, Suite 102
Coralville, IA 52241-2904

Background: The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) of 1996 was enacted by congress to help protect health coverage for workers and their families. It also addresses electronic transaction standards and the need to ensure the security and privacy of health data. We are required by law to maintain the privacy of protected health information, and must inform you of our privacy practices and legal duties. The security and privacy of your protected health information is important to us and is the subject of this Privacy Notice.

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

I. Use and Disclosure of Your Protected Health Information for Treatment, Payment, and Health Care Operations

Your therapist may use or disclose information in your records for *treatment, payment, and health care operations* purposes with *your consent*. *Personal health information (PHI)* refers to information in a client's health record that could identify that client. *Use* of this information refers only to activities within our office such as sharing, employing, applying, examining, and analyzing information that identifies you. *Disclosure* of information refers to activities outside of our office such as releasing, transferring, or providing access to information about you to other parties. Throughout this notice, the term "you" may refer to the individual who is the client or the individual's parent, legal guardian or adult who has been legally determined to be responsible for the client. In providing for your *treatment*, your therapist may use or disclose information in your record to help you obtain health care services from another provider, or to assist your therapist in providing for your care. In order to obtain *payment* for services, your therapist may use or disclose information from your record, with your consent. For example, your therapist may submit the appropriate diagnosis to your health insurer to help you obtain reimbursement for your care. Your therapist also may use or disclose information from your record to allow *health care operations* (e.g., quality assessment and improvement activities, business-related matters such as audits and administrative services, and case management and care coordination).

II. Use and Disclosure Requiring Authorization

Except as described in this Notice, your therapist may not make any use or disclosure of information from your record for purposes outside of treatment, payment, and health care operations unless you give your written authorization. In particular, your therapist will need to secure an authorization before releasing psychotherapy notes which are kept separate from the rest of your treatment records. These are notes your therapist may have made about your conversations during treatment and evaluation sessions. You may revoke an authorization in writing at any time, but this will not affect any use or disclosure made by your therapist before the revocation. In addition, if the authorization was obtained as a condition of obtaining insurance coverage, the insurer may have the right to contest the policy or a claim under the policy even if you revoke the authorization.

III. Use and Disclosure Without Consent or Authorization

There are certain circumstances, listed below, in which your therapist is permitted (or, in some cases, required) to use or disclose information from your record without your permission:

Child Abuse: If your therapist knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is or has been abused, abandoned, or neglected, the law requires that your therapist report such knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities.

Adult and Domestic Abuse: If your therapist knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a vulnerable adult (disabled or elderly) has been or is being abused, neglected, or exploited, your therapist is required by law to report such knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities.

Health Oversight: If your therapist receives a subpoena from the Iowa Board of Psychology Examiners or the Iowa Board of Social Workers for your protected health information, your therapist must comply with

the subpoena and disclose the information.

Judicial or Administrative Proceedings: If you are involved in a court proceeding and a request is made for your records, your therapist will not release information without your written authorization *or* a subpoena of which you have been properly notified, *or* a court order. The privilege does not apply if you are being evaluated for a third party, or if the evaluation is court-ordered, or in certain other limited instances. You will be informed in advance if this is the case.

Serious Threat to Health or Safety: If you present a clear and immediate probability of physical harm to yourself, to other individuals, or to society, your therapist may communicate relevant information concerning this to the potential victim, appropriate family member, or appropriate authorities.

Workers' Compensation: If you file a workers' compensation claim, your therapist may disclose information from your record as authorized by workers' compensation laws.

IV. Client's Rights

Right to Request Restrictions: You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of protected health information. However, your therapist is not required to agree to a restriction you request.

Right to Receive Confidential Communications by Alternative Means and at Alternative Location: You have the right to request to have confidential communications of PHI delivered by alternative means and/or at alternative locations. (For example, you may not want a family member to know that you are seeing a therapist. Upon your request, your therapist may be able to arrange to send your bills to another address.)

Right to Inspect and Copy: You have the right to inspect or obtain a copy (or both) of PHI in your therapist's mental health and billing records used to make decisions about you for as long as the PHI is maintained in the record. This may be subject to certain limitations and fees. Upon request, your therapist will discuss with you the details of the request process.

Right to Amend: You have the right to request an amendment of PHI for as long as the PHI is maintained in the record. Your request must be in writing, and your therapist may deny your request.

Right to an Accounting: You have the right to request an accounting of certain disclosures made by your therapist. Upon request, your therapist will discuss with you the details of the accounting process.

Right to a Paper Copy: You have the right to obtain a paper copy of this notice from your therapist upon request, even if you have agreed to receive the notice electronically.

V. Psychologist's or Social Worker's Duties

Your therapist is required by law to maintain the privacy of PHI and to provide you with a notice of his or her legal duties and privacy practices with respect to PHI. Your therapist reserves the right to change the privacy policies and practices described in this notice. Unless your therapist notifies you of such changes, however, he or she is required to abide by the terms currently in effect. If your therapist makes significant revisions to these policies and procedures he or she will provide you with a copy of those revisions. Updated notices of Ancera privacy policies will always be available for review upon request at our office.

VI. Questions or Problems

If you need more information or have questions about the privacy practices described above, or if you have a problem with how your PHI has been handled, or if you feel your privacy rights have been violated, please contact our Privacy Officer listed below. You have a right to file a complaint with us and with the Secretary of the Federal Department of Health and Human Services. We promise that we will not in any way limit your care here or take any actions against you if you file a complaint.

Privacy Officer: Alison Milburn, Ph.D.
 Ancera Psychology Associates, PC
 (319) 351-9777

This notice will go into effect on June 1, 2012