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## **NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES**

**Privacy Officer: Nancy E. Hart**  
**Effective Date: September 1, 2007**

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

We understand your medical information is private and we strive to protect the confidentiality of your medical records. Federal regulations require that we issue this official notice of our privacy practices. You have the right to the confidentiality of your medical information, and this practice is required by law to maintain the privacy of that information. The practice is required to abide by the terms of the Notice of Privacy Practices currently in effect and to provide notice of its legal duties and privacy practices with respect to the protected health information. Prior to making important changes to our privacy practices, we will make available on request a revised Notice of Privacy Practices.

This notice will be followed by any health care professional authorized to enter information in your medical record. All employees, staff and other personnel at this practice who may need access to your information must abide by this Notice. All Subsidiaries, business associates, sites and location of this practice may share medical information with each other for treatment, payment purposes or health care operations described in this notice. Except where treatment is involved, only the minimum necessary information needed to accomplish the task will be used.

### **HOW WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU**

The following categories describe different ways that we may use and disclose medical information without your specific consent or authorization. Examples are provided for each category of uses or disclosures. Not all possible uses or disclosures are listed.

**For Treatment:** We may use and disclose medical information about you to provide you with medical treatment or services. Example: We may send a report of your hearing evaluation to your doctor.

**For Payment:** We may use and disclose medical information about you so that treatment and services you receive from us may be billed and payment may be collected from your insurance, third party or you. Example: We may need to send your protected health information, such as your name, address, office visit date and codes identifying your diagnosis and treatment to your insurance company for payment.

**Health Care Operations:** We may use and disclose medical information about you for health care operations to assure that you receive quality care. Example: We may use medical information to review our treatment and services and evaluate the performance of our staff in caring for you.

**Appointment Reminders:** We may use and disclose information to contact you as a reminder that you have an appointment at Healthy Hearing and Balance. Example: We may leave appointment information on your answering machine.

**Individuals Involved in Your Care or Payment of Your Care:** We may release information about you to a friend or family member who is involved in your health care or to someone who helps pay for your care. Example: We may release information to your legal Patient Representative.

**Other Uses or Disclosures That Can Be Made Without Consent or Authorization**

As required during an investigation by Law Enforcement Agencies  
 To avert a serious threat to public health and safety  
 As required by military command authorities for their medical records  
 To Workers' Compensation or similar programs for processing of claims  
 In response to legal proceeding  
 To a coroner or medical examiner for identification of body  
 If an inmate, to the correctional institution or law enforcement official  
 As required by the food US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)  
 Other health care providers' treatment activities  
 Other covered entities' health care operations activities (to the extent permitted under HIPAA)  
 Uses and disclosure required by law  
 Uses and disclosures in domestic violence or neglect situations  
 Health Oversight activities  
 Other public health activities  
 We may contact you to provide appointment reminders of information about treatment alternatives or other health  
 Related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

**Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information Requiring your Written Authorization:** 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 authorization. If you give us authorization to use or disclose medical information about you, you may revoke that authorization, in writing, at any time. If you revoke your authorization, we will thereafter 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 authorization, and that we are required to retain our records of the care we have provided you.

## **YOUR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS REGARDING YOUR MEDICAL INFORMATION**

**Right to Request Confidential Communication:** You have the right to request how we should send communications to you about medical matters, and where you would like those communications sent. To request confidential communications, you must make your request to the Privacy Officer at this practice. We will not ask you the reason for your request. We will accommodate all reasonable requests. Your request must specify how or where you wish to be contacted. We reserve the right to deny a request if it imposes an unreasonable burden on the practice.

**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 your treatment, payment or health care operations or to someone who is involved with or in your care or the payment for your care. We are not required to agree to your request. If we do agree, we will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide you with emergency treatment. To request restrictions you must submit your request in writing to the Privacy Officer at this practice. In your request, you must tell us what information you want limited.

**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; information compiled for use in a civil, criminal or administrative action or proceeding and protected health information to which access is prohibited by law. To inspect and copy medical information that may be used to make decisions about you, you must submit your request in writing to the Privacy Officer at this practice.

**Right to Amend:** If you feel the 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. To request an amendment, your request must be made in writing and submitted to the Privacy Officer at this practice. 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 the information was not created by us, is not part of the medical information kept at this practice, is not part of the information which you would be permitted to inspect and copy, or which we deem to be accurate and complete. If we deny your request for an amendment, you have the right to file a statement of disagreement with us. We may prepare a rebuttal to your statement and will provide a copy of any such rebuttal. Statements of disagreement and any corresponding rebuttals will be kept on file and sent out with any future authorized requests for information pertaining to the appropriate portion of your record.

**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, with the effective date in the upper left hand corner of the first page.