

**NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES
FOR PATIENTS OF ST. MARY'S HEALTH SYSTEM**

YOUR CHOICES: For certain health information, you can tell us your choices about what we share. If you have a clear preference for how we share your information in the situations described below, talk to us. Tell us what you want us to do, and we will follow your instructions.

Your Information, Your Rights, Our Responsibilities.

This notice for St. Mary's Health System, its medical staff and all its affiliated entities, describes how your protected health information (PHI) may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information.

Please review it carefully.

YOUR RIGHTS: When it comes to your health information, you have certain rights. This section explains your rights and some of our responsibilities to help you.

Get an electronic or paper copy of your medical record

You can ask to see or get an electronic or paper copy of your medical record and other health information we have about you. Ask us how to do this. We will provide a copy or a summary of your health information, usually within 30 days of your request. We may charge a reasonable, cost-based fee.

Ask us to correct your medical record

You can ask us to correct health information about you that you think is incorrect or incomplete. Ask us how to do this. We may say "no" to your request. We will explain why in writing within 60 days, which may be extended in certain circumstances.

Request confidential communications

You can ask us to contact you in a specific way (for example, home or office phone) or to send mail to a different address. We will say "yes" to all reasonable requests.

Ask us to limit what we use or share

You can ask us not to use or share certain health information for treatment, payment, or our operations.

We are not required to agree to your request, and we may say "no" if it would affect your care.

If you pay for a service or health care item out-of-pocket in full, you can ask us not to share that information for the purpose of payment or our operations with your health insurer. We will say "yes" unless a law requires us to share that information.

Get a list of those with whom we've shared information

You can ask for a list (accounting) of the times we've shared your health information for six years prior to the date you ask, who we shared it with, and why. We will include all the disclosures except for those about treatment, payment, and health care operations, and certain other disclosures (such as any you asked us to make). We'll provide one accounting a year for free but will charge a reasonable, cost-based fee if you ask for another one within 12 months.

Get a copy of this privacy notice

You can ask for a paper copy of this notice at any time, even if you have agreed to receive the notice electronically. We will provide you with a paper copy promptly.

Choose someone to act for you

If you have given someone medical power of attorney or if someone is your legal guardian, that person can exercise your rights and make choices about your health information. We will make sure the person has this authority and can act for you before we take any action.

File a complaint if you feel your rights are violated

If you feel your rights have been violated, you can file a complaint by contacting our **Privacy and Compliance Department via our Patient Relations line at: (844)894-5534.** You can also email us at: Compliance-Privacy@covenanthealth.net

You can file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights by sending a letter to 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201, calling 1-877-696-6775, or visiting www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/complaints/ We will never retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

In these cases, you have both the right and choice to tell us to:

Share information with your family, close friends, or others involved in your care
Share information in a disaster relief situation
Include your information in a hospital directory
If you are not able to tell us your preference, for example if you are unconscious, we may go ahead and share your information if we believe it is in your best interest. We may also share your information when needed to lessen a serious and imminent threat to health or safety.

In these cases we never share your information unless you give us written permission:

Marketing purposes
Sale of your information
Most sharing of psychotherapy notes

Uses and Disclosures of your Highly Confidential Information:

Certain types of medical information have additional protection under state or federal laws. In many circumstances
Maine law prohibits the release of HIV/AIDS, mental health, and alcohol and drug abuse treatment information without your permission in writing.

In the case of fundraising:

We may contact you for fundraising efforts, but you can opt out by telling us not to contact you again.

OUR USES AND DISCLOSURES

How do we typically use or share your health information without your authorization?

We will use or share your health information in the following ways.

Treat you

We can use your health information and share it with other professionals who are treating you.
Example: *A doctor treating you for an injury asks another doctor about your overall health condition.*

Run our organization

We can use and share your health information to run our organization, improve your care, and contact you when necessary.
Example: *We use health information about you to manage your treatment and services.*

Bill for your services

We can use and share your health information to bill and get payment from health plans or other entities.
Example: *We give information about you to your health insurance plan so it will pay for your services.*

How else can we use or share your health information?

We are allowed or required to share your information in other ways – usually in ways that contribute to the public good, such as public health and research. We have to meet many conditions in the law before we can share your information for these purposes. For more information see: www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/consumers/index.html

Help with public health and safety issues:

We can share health information about you for certain situations such as:
Preventing disease
Helping with product recalls
Reporting adverse reactions to medications
Reporting suspected abuse, neglect, or domestic violence
Preventing or reducing a serious threat to anyone's health or safety

Do research:

We can use or share your information for health research.

Comply with the law:

We will share information about you if state or federal laws require it, including with the Department of Health and Human Services if it wants to see that we're complying with federal privacy law.

Respond to organ and tissue donation requests:

We can share health information about you with organ procurement organizations.

Work with a medical examiner or funeral director:

We can share health information with a coroner, medical examiner, or funeral director when an individual dies.

Respond to lawsuits and legal actions:

We can share health information about you in response to a court or administrative order, or in response to a subpoena.

Address workers' compensation, law enforcement, and other government requests:

We can use or share health information about you:
For workers' compensation claims
For law enforcement purposes or with a law enforcement official
With health oversight agencies for activities authorized by law
For special government functions such as military, national security, and presidential protective services

Facility Directory:

Your health information may be used in our Facility Directory. The directory listing will include your name and room. You may restrict whether your information is included in the directory or to whom we may release such information.

**(For Maine Facilities/Patients Only)
HealthInfoNet (HIN):**

We participate with HealthInfoNet, the statewide Health Information Exchange (HIE) designated by the State of Maine. The HIE is a secure electronic repository for health care providers to share your important health information to support your treatment and continuity of care. You do not have to participate in HIN to receive care. To opt out please visit www.hinonet.org or call toll-free 1-866-592-4352.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

We are required by law to maintain the privacy and security of your protected health information.

We will let you know promptly if a breach occurs that may have compromised the privacy or security of your information.

We must follow the duties and privacy practices described in this notice and give you a copy of it.

We will not use or share your information other than as described here unless you tell us we can in writing. If you tell us we can, you may change your mind at any time. Let us know in writing if you change your mind.

For more information see:

www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/consumers/noticepp.html

Changes to the Terms of This Notice

We can change the terms of this notice, and the changes will apply to all information we have about you. The new notice will be available upon request, in our office, and on our web site.

This Notice of Privacy Practices applies to all the covered entities under Covenant Health Care.