



NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Effective: April 14, 2003

This notice describes how medical information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information.

Please review this notice carefully.

PRIVACY PROMISE

VALLEY MENTAL HEALTH (VMH) understands that your medical and health information is personal. Protecting your health information is important. We follow strict federal and state laws that require us to maintain the confidentiality of your health information.

HOW WE USE YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION

When you receive care from VMH, we may use your health information for treating you, billing for services, and conducting our normal business known as health care operations. Examples of how we use your information include:

Treatment – We keep records of the care and services provided to you. Health care providers use these records to deliver quality care to meet your needs. For example, your doctor may share your health information with a specialist who will assist in your treatment. Some substance abuse records may have additional restrictions on the use and disclosure under state and federal laws.

Payment – We keep billing records that include payment information and documentation of the services provided to you. Your information may be used to obtain payment from you, your insurance company, or other third party. We may also contact your insurance company to verify coverage for your care or to notify them of upcoming services that may need prior notice or approval. For example, we may disclose information about the services provided to you to claim and obtain payment from your insurance company or Medicaid or Medicare.

Health Care Operations – We use health information to improve the quality of care, train staff and students, provide customer service, manage costs, conduct required business duties, and make plans to better serve our communities. For example, we may use your health information to evaluate the quality of treatment and services provided by our physicians, nurses, and other health care workers.

OTHER USES OF YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION

We may also use your health information to:

- Recommend treatment alternatives;
- Tell you about health services and products that may benefit you;
- Share information with family or friends involved in your care or payment for your care, when appropriate;
- Share information with third parties who assist us with treatment, payment, and health care operations. Our business associates must protect your information by following our privacy practices;
- Remind you of an appointment (if you do not wish to be reminded, notify the scheduler); and
- Contact you for fundraising purposes (if you do not wish to participate, notify the Program Manager at the facility where you received care).

SHARING YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION

There are limited situations when we are permitted or required to disclose health information without your signed authorization. These situations are:

- For public health purposes such as reporting communicable diseases, work-related illnesses, or other diseases and injuries permitted by law, reporting births and deaths, and reporting reactions to drugs and problems with medical devices;
- To protect victims of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence;
- For health oversight activities such as investigations, audits, and inspections;
- For lawsuits and similar proceedings;
- When otherwise required by law;
- When requested by law enforcement as required by law or court order;
- To coroners, medical examiners, and funeral directors;
- For organ and tissue donation;
- For research approved by our review process under strict federal guidelines;
- To reduce or prevent a serious threat to public health and safety;
- For workers' compensation or other similar programs if you are injured at work; and
- For specialized government functions such as intelligence and national security.

All other uses and disclosures, not described in this notice, require your signed authorization. You may revoke your authorization at any time with a written statement.

OUR PRIVACY RESPONSIBILITIES

VMH is required by law to:

- Maintain the privacy of your health information;
- Provide this notice that describes the ways we may use and share your health information; and
- Follow the terms of the notice currently in effect.

We reserve the right to make changes to this notice at any time and make the new privacy practices effective for all information we maintain. Current notices will be posted in all of our facilities and on our website, www.vmh.com. You may also request a copy of any notice from the Medical Records Clerk in your program.

YOUR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

You have the right to:

- Request restrictions on how we use and share your health information for treatment, payment, or operations or to individuals (family, friends involved with your care). We will consider all requests for restrictions carefully but are not required to agree to any restriction;
- Request that we use a specific telephone number or address to communicate with you;
- Request to inspect and copy your health information, including medical and billing records. Fees may apply. Under limited circumstances, we may deny you access to a portion of your health information and you may request a review of the denial;
- Request corrections or additions to your health information. We may deny your request if we think the amendment is not accurate.
- Request an accounting of certain disclosures of your health information made by us. The accounting does not include disclosures made for treatment, payment, and health care operations and disclosures authorized by you. Your request must state the period of time desired for the accounting, which must be within the six years prior to your request and exclude dates prior to April 14, 2003. The first accounting is free but a fee will apply if more than one request is made in a 12-month period; and
- Request a paper copy of this notice even if you agree to receive it electronically.

The above requests must be made in writing. Contact the Medical Records Clerk in your Program for the appropriate form for your request.

OUR ORGANIZATION

This notice describes the privacy practices of:

VALLEY MENTAL HEALTH
Main Office: 5965 South 900 East
Salt Lake City, Utah 84121

CONTACT US

If you would like further information about your privacy rights, are concerned that your privacy rights have been violated, or disagree with a decision that we made about access to your health information, contact: The Medical Records Clerk or Program Manager where you received care or the Privacy Officer, John M. Wunderli, at Valley Mental Health's Main Office at (801) 263-7100. Visit our Website at www.vmh.com

COMPLAINTS

If you have a complaint, or are dissatisfied with the services, you may contact your therapist, your therapist's supervisor, or the Area Director. You may also call the Medicaid Management at (801) 565-6998 for adults, or (801) 264-2325 for children and adolescents. You may also call Medicaid at (801) 538-6155 or toll free at 1-800-662-9651 to discuss your complaint. You may also request a formal hearing with Medicaid if dissatisfied with the outcome of your grievance. VMH has a consumer advocate available at (801) 536-6581. A copy of the Valley Mental Health complaint/grievance process will be made available upon request. We will investigate all complaints and will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint. You may also file a written complaint with the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 509 F HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201.