

## Hospice of Humboldt Notice of Privacy Practice

### Use and Disclosure of Health Information

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

Hospice of Humboldt may use your health information, information that constitutes protected health information as defined in the Privacy Rule of the Administrative Simplification provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, for purposes of providing you treatment, obtaining payment for your care, and conducting our health care business operations.

Other than the circumstances and purposes described below, Hospice of Humboldt will not disclose your health information to any other persons or organizations without your written authorization. If you or your agent authorizes Hospice of Humboldt to use or disclose your health information, you may revoke that authorization in writing at any time.

- To Provide Treatment. Hospice of Humboldt may use your health information to coordinate internally such as between members of the interdisciplinary team, and with others outside Hospice who are involved in your care, such as your primary physician, family members, pharmacists, suppliers of medical equipment, or other health care professionals. Your family members or caregivers may be contacted during the year-long bereavement follow-up program.
- To Obtain Payment. Hospice of Humboldt may disclose your health information in invoices to collect payment from third parties for the care you receive from Hospice. For example, we may be required by your health insurer to provide information regarding your health care status so that the insurer will reimburse us. If we need to obtain approval from your insurer, we may have to explain to the insurer your need for Hospice care and the services that will be provided to you.
- To Conduct Health Care Business Operations. Hospice of Humboldt may use and disclose health care information during our business operations in order to facilitate our functions, and as necessary, to provide quality care to all our patients. Health care business operations may include such activities as Continuous Quality Improvement activities, activities designed to improve health services or reduce health care costs, protocol development, case management and care coordination, consultation with other health care providers and patients about treatment and palliative care alternatives, review of staff for performance evaluations, supervised training programs for future health care or non-health care professionals, accreditation, certification, licensing or credentialing activities, review and auditing procedures, including compliance reviews, medical reviews, legal services and compliance programs, and business analysis for the purpose of planning and development, cost management and formulary development.
- For Fundraising Activities and Community Information Mailings. Hospice of Humboldt may use information about you including your name, address, phone number and the dates you received care in order to contact you or your family for fundraising activities or to advise you of upcoming Hospice sponsored events. If you do not want us to contact you or your family, notify the Outreach Coordinator at 707 445-8443 and indicate that you do not wish to be contacted.
- For Appointment or Visit Reminders. Hospice of Humboldt may use and disclose your health information to remind you that you have an appointment or are scheduled for a visit by a member of your care team.
- For Treatment Alternative. Hospice of Humboldt may use and disclose your health information to tell you about or recommend possible treatment options or alternatives that may be of interest to you.

- When Legally Required. Hospice of Humboldt may disclose your health information when we are required to do so by any federal, state or local law.
- When there are Risks to Public Health. Hospice of Humboldt may disclose your health information in order to prevent or control disease, injury or disability. And we are required to aid in the conduct of public health surveillance, investigations and interventions, report adverse events to appropriate licensing boards, notify a person who has been exposed to a communicable disease or who may be at risk of contracting or spreading a disease, and notify an employer about an employee's health as legally required.
- To Report Abuse, Neglect, or Domestic Violence. Hospice of Humboldt is mandated to notify government authorities if we believe a patient is the victim of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence. We will make this disclosure only when specifically required by law.
- To Conduct Health Oversight Activities. Hospice of Humboldt may disclose your health information to a health oversight agency to aid in audits, civil administrative or criminal investigations, inspections, licensure, or disciplinary action. However, we may not disclose your health information if you are the subject of an investigation, and your health information is not directly related to your health care or public benefits.
- In Connection with Judicial and Administrative Proceedings. Hospice of Humboldt may disclose your health information in response to a court order or an administrative tribunal or in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process, but only after we make an effort to notify you about the request.
- For Law Enforcement Purposes. As permitted or required by state law, Hospice of Humboldt may disclose your health information to a law enforcement official for law enforcement purposes as required by law for reporting of certain types of wounds or other physical injuries pursuant to the court order, warrant, subpoena, summons, or similar process; for the purpose of identifying or locating a suspect, fugitive, material witness, or missing person; under certain limited circumstances, when you are the victim of a crime; if we suspect your death was the result of criminal conduct, including the conduct of a Hospice of Humboldt's staff member; and in an emergency to report a crime.
- To Coroners and Medical Examiners. Hospice of Humboldt may disclose your health information to coroners and medical examiners for purposes of determining your cause of death or for other duties, as authorized by law.
- To Funeral Directors. Hospice of Humboldt may disclose your health information to funeral directors consistent with applicable law, and, if necessary, for the purpose of assisting them in carrying out their duties with respect to your funeral arrangements. If necessary, we may disclose your health information prior to, and in reasonable anticipation of, your death.
- In the Event of a Serious Threat to Health or Safety. Hospice of Humboldt may, consistent with applicable law and ethical standards of conduct, disclose your health information if we, in good faith, believe that such disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to your health or safety or to the health and safety of the public.
- For Specific Government Functions. In certain circumstances, the federal regulations authorize Hospice of Humboldt to use or disclose your health information to facilitate specified government functions relating to military and veterans, national security, and intelligence activities; protective services for the President and others; medical suitability determinations; and inmates and law enforcement custody.
- For Worker's Compensation. Hospice of Humboldt may release your health information for worker's compensation or similar programs.

## *Your Rights Regarding Your Health Information*

### **Right to Request Restrictions**

You have the right to request a limit on Hospice of Humboldt's disclosure of your health information to anyone who is involved in your care or the payment for your care.

However, we are not required to agree to your request. If you wish to limit who has access to you information, please contact a member of your care team at 707 445-8443.

## Right to Receive Confidential Communications

You have the right to request that Hospice of Humboldt communicate with you in a certain way. For example, you may ask that we hold any discussion of your health information with you privately and with no other family members or caregivers present, or that we not leave messages for you on your answering machine. If you wish to receive confidential communications, please contact a member of your care team at 707 445-8443. Hospice of Humboldt will not ask you to give any reason and will attempt to honor your request.

## Other Rights

- Right to Inspect and Copy Your Health Information. You have the right to inspect and copy your health information, including billing records. A request to inspect and copy your records may be made to Hospice of Humboldt at 707 445-8443. If you request a copy of your health information, we may charge a reasonable fee for copying the records you request.
- Right to Amend Health Care Information. If you or your agent believe that your health information records are incorrect or incomplete, you may request that Hospice of Humboldt amend your records. That request may be made as long as the information is maintained by Hospice of Humboldt. A request for an amendment of records must be made in writing to Hospice of Humboldt at 2010 Myrtle Avenue, Eureka, California 95501. We may deny your request if it is not in writing or does not include a reason for the amendment. We may also deny your request if you want to change medical records that were not created by us, for example, copies of your medical records that were created by another physician.
- Right to an Accounting of Disclosures. You or your agent have the right to know if we have disclosed your health information to anyone else for any reason other than for treatment, payment, or health care business operations. The request must be made in writing to Hospice of Humboldt at 2010 Myrtle Avenue, Eureka, California 95501. The request should specify the time period you are interested in. Requests may not be made for periods of time in excess of six years. We will give you the information free of charge for the first 12 month period you request. After that, we may charge you a reasonable fee for researching and documenting the information you want.
- Right to a Paper Copy of this Notice. You or your agent have a right to receive a separate paper copy of this Notice at any time even if you or your agent has received this Notice previously. To obtain a separate paper copy, please contact Hospice of Humboldt at 707 445-8443.
- Duties of Hospice. Hospice of Humboldt is required by law to maintain the privacy of your health information and to provide you or your agent this Notice of its duties and privacy practices. Hospice of Humboldt is required to abide by the terms of this Notice as it may be amended from time to time. We reserve the right to change the terms of its Notice and to make the new Notice provisions effective for all health information that we maintain. If we change this Notice, we will provide a copy of the revised Notice to you or your agent upon request.

## Contact Person

Hospice of Humboldt encourages you to express any concerns you may have regarding the privacy of your information to our Compliance Officer. You or your agent may contact the Compliance Officer at Hospice of Humboldt, 2010 Myrtle Avenue, Eureka, California, 95501 or by phone at 707 445-8443, if you have any questions or concerns regarding this notice or the privacy of your health information or medical records.