

Privacy Practices

Notice of Privacy Practices

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

Patient Privacy

At University Health System (UHS), your privacy is a priority. We follow applicable federal and state guidelines to maintain the confidentiality of your medical information. The federal guidelines with regard to the confidentiality of your medical information may be found in the Code of Federal Regulations at 45 CFR §§ 164.500 et seq.

This is a joint notice covering:

- All UHS employees, volunteers, students, residents, service providers, including clinicians, who have access to health information
- Any health care professional authorized to enter information into your medical record
- University of Tennessee Medical Center
- University Health Network
- University Health System Ventures, Inc.
- Those participating in managed care networks with UTM
- Other companies that provide services to UTM
- These persons or entities will share your medical information, as necessary.

Important: UTM may share your medical information with members of UTM Medical Staff (doctors) and other independent medical professionals in order to provide treatment, payment, and healthcare operations and perform other activities for UTM through the OHCA (Organized Health Care Arrangement.) Those professionals have agreed to follow this Notice and participate in the privacy program of UTM, but many doctors (or other professionals) providing services in our facilities practice medicine as independent professionals who own their own businesses, so UTM will not be responsible for their acts or omissions related to your care or privacy/security rights.

Our Responsibilities

UHS is required by law to:

- Maintain the privacy of your medical
- Provide this notice of our duties and privacy
- Abide by the terms of the notice currently in
- We reserve the right to change privacy practices and make the new practices effective for all the information we maintain. Revised notices will be available in our facilities, and will be available from your health care provider.

How Do We Use Medical Information?

When you visit a UHS facility, we may use your medical information to treat you, to obtain payment for services, and to conduct normal business known as health care operations. Examples of how we use your information include:

Treatment – We keep a record of each visit and/or admission. This record may include your test results, diagnoses, medications, and your response to medications or other therapies. This allows your doctors, nurses and other clinical staff to provide appropriate care to meet your needs.

Payment – We document the services and supplies you receive at each visit or admission and may provide this information as needed so that you, your insurance company or another third party can pay us. We may tell your health plan about upcoming treatment or services that require their prior approval.

Health Care Operations – Medical information is used to improve the services we provide, to train staff and students, for business management, quality improvement, and for customer service.

Other Services

We may also use information to:

- Recommend treatment alternatives.
- Tell you about health benefits and services.
- Communicate with family or friends involved in your care.
- Communicate with other UHS organizations or associates for treatment, payment, or health care operations.
- Business associates must follow privacy rules.
- Health Information Exchanges

We may release your medical records or other information about you to a **Health Information Exchange** or a **Health Information Network** (called an "HIE" in this Notice). HIEs provide healthcare providers (including doctors and health facilities) and insurance companies with the ability to share or "exchange" clinical information about you electronically. HIEs are designed to provide your physicians/health facilities/providers with greater access to your clinical information with the goal of reducing the number of tests and treatment delays that result from the use of paper medical records. This helps providers communicate and provide patients with safer care. HIEs are very helpful when providing care in emergencies. The healthcare providers who have access to HIEs will have access to any of your personal or health information that has been entered into the HIE, and may use that information for treatment, payment, or healthcare operations, or as otherwise required/allowed by state and federal law.

HIEs were developed to assist the federal government in its nationwide health information technology system.

HIEs are networks that links UTM, its Affiliates, its physicians (employed or independent,) and other medical care providers and allows them to exchange health information about you. HIEs are linked with other HIEs or networks across the state and country acting as a commonly shared medical record to help provide information and care. For example, your primary care physician may have access to your OB/GYN or cardiologist's records. An ED physician treating you in another state may have access to your medical record, etc.

We may or may not send any or all of your past, present, or future medical information into the HIE, and your healthcare providers may or may not have access to HIE. Therefore, we encourage you to always notify your doctor of all your past and present medical conditions, treatments and medications.

Sensitive Information: Sensitive information (such as HIV/AIDs or other communicable disease, mental health, drug and alcohol treatment information) is protected under state and federal law. We will provide sensitive information to the HIE but have put into place protections to help prevent the disclosure of sensitive information to those other than your treating providers, their workforce members and business associates. However, because sensitive information cannot be completely isolated or removed from other medical information, there is a chance that sensitive information (or information that could indicate you have had treatment for a sensitive condition) could be included within your medical information. Therefore, if you are concerned at all about a certain piece of medical information being known, we strongly recommend you tell us you do not want your information in the HIE. In other words, you should "opt-out" of participation.

To Opt-Out of the HIE: If you do not want your personal or medical information automatically entered into or disclosed through an HIE, please let us know by contacting the Compliance Office at (865) 305-6566, or at registration points throughout UTMCK.

Please allow 5 business days for us to process your opt-out request. Information released to HIEs prior to processing of opt-out request may remain in the HIE. Please note that you must also opt-out separately with each of your physician and other providers who may participate in any HIEs.

Patient Portal

We may use and disclose information through a patient portal which allows you to securely view certain parts of your medical record such as lab results and billing information.

Your Choice

The services below are optional. Please inform scheduling or admitting if you do not wish to participate by calling (865) 251-4488.

- Sending appointment reminders.
- Include you on the inpatient list for callers or visitors when admitted.
- Let your clergy know if you have been admitted.
- Philanthropic Support
- Being contacted by phone, mail, or email for UHS or UTGSM fundraising.

If you do not wish to be contacted, please contact the development office by phone or email at the following:

(865) 305-6611

development@utmck.edu.

Other Permitted Uses and Disclosures of Health Care Information:

- There are times when we are permitted or required to disclose medical information without signed permission. Some of these situations are:
- For public health activities such as tracking diseases or medical devices.
- To protect victims of abuse or neglect.
- For federal and state health oversight activities such as fraud investigations.
- For judicial or administrative proceedings.
- If required by law or for law enforcement.
- To coroners, medical examiners and funeral
- For blood, tissue or organ donation.
- To avert serious threat to public health or safety.
- For specialized government functions such as military, national security intelligence and protective service.
- To Workers' Compensation if you are injured at work.
- To a correctional institution if you are an inmate.
- For research following strict internal review to ensure protection of information.

All other uses and disclosures not previously described, including psychotherapy notes, may only be done with your signed authorization. You may revoke your authorization at any time.