



## Wahiawa General Hospital

### NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Form WGH-HIPAA-1403 • Item No. 809442

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.

**This Notice describes the privacy practices of Wahiawa General Hospital and the physicians who provide services to patients at this facility.**

**Patient Health Information** Under federal law, your patient health information is protected and confidential. Patient health information includes information about your symptoms, test results, diagnosis, treatment, and related medical information. Your health information also includes payment, billing, and insurance information.

**How We Use Your Patient Health Information** We use health information about you for treatment, to obtain payment, and for health care operations, including administrative purposes and evaluation of the quality of care that you receive. Under some circumstances, we may be required to use or disclose the information even without your consent

#### **Examples of Treatment, Payment, and Health Care Operations**

**Treatment:** We will use and disclose your health information to provide you with medical treatment or services. For example, nurses, physicians, and other members of your treatment team will record information in your record and use it to determine the most appropriate course of care. We may also disclose the information to other health care providers who are participating in your treatment, to pharmacists who are filling your prescriptions, and to family members who are helping with your care.

**Payment:** We will use and disclose your health information for payment purposes. For example, we may need to obtain authorization from your insurance company before providing certain types of treatment. We will submit bills and maintain records of payments from your health plan.

**Health Care Operations:** We will use and disclose your health information to conduct our standard internal operations. For example, members of the medical staff, or the quality improvement committee may use information to assess the care and outcomes of your case.

**Other Uses and Disclosures** We may use or disclose identifiable health information about you for other reasons, even without your permission. Subject to certain requirements, we are permitted to give out health information without your permission for the following purposes:

- **Required by Law:** We may be required by law to report gunshot wounds, suspected abuse or neglect, or similar injuries and events.
- **Public Health Activities:** As required by law, we may disclose vital statistics, diseases, information related to recalls of dangerous products, and similar information to public health authorities.
- **Health oversight:** We may be required to disclose information to assist in investigations and audits, eligibility for government programs, and similar activities.
- **Judicial and administrative proceedings:** We may disclose information in response to an appropriate subpoena or court order.
- **Law enforcement purposes:** Subject to certain restrictions, we may disclose information required by law enforcement officials.
- **Deaths:** We may report information regarding deaths to coroners, medical examiners, funeral directors, and organ donation agencies.
- **Serious threat to health or safety:** We may use and disclose information when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of the public or another person.
- **Business Associates:** There are some services provided in our organization through contracts with business associates. Examples include physician services in the Emergency Department and Radiology. We may disclose your health information to our business associates so that they can perform the job we've asked them to do. To insure your health information is protected, however, we require our business associates to appropriately safeguard your information.
- **Directory:** Unless you notify us that you object, we will use your name, location in the facility, general condition, and religious affiliation for directory purposes. This information may be provided to members of the clergy and, except for religious affiliation to other people who ask for you by name.
- **Notification:** We may use or disclose information to notify or assist in notifying a family member, personal representative, or another person responsible for your care, your location and general conditions.
- **Communication with Family:** Health professionals, using their best judgement, may disclose to a family member, other relative, close personal friend or any other person you identify, health information relevant to that person's involvement in

your care or payment related to your care.

- *Research:* We may use or disclose information for approved medical research.
- *Workers Compensation:* We may release information about you for workers compensation or similar programs providing benefits for work-related injuries or illness.
- *Marketing:* We may contact you to provide information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.
- *Appointment reminders:* We may use your information to contact you with appointment reminders.
- *Fundraising:* Unless you notify us that you object, we may contact you as part of a fundraising effort.
- *Food and Drug Administration (FDA):* We may disclose to the FDA health information relative to adverse event with respect to food, drug, supplements, product and product defects or post marketing surveillance information to enable product recalls, repairs or replacement.
- *Military and Special Government Functions:* If you are a member of the armed forces, we may release information as required by military command authorities. We may also disclose information to correctional institutions or for national security purposes.

In any other situation, we will ask for your written authorization before using or disclosing any identifiable health information about you. If you choose to sign an authorization to disclose information, you can later revoke that authorization to stop any future uses and disclosures.

### **Individual Rights**

You have the following rights with regard to your health information. Please contact the person listed below to obtain the appropriate forms for exercising these rights.

*Request Restrictions:* You may request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of your health information. We are not required to agree to such restrictions, but if we do agree, we must abide by those restrictions.

*Confidential Communications:* You may ask us to communicate with you by alternative means or at alternative locations.  
*Inspect and Obtain Copies:* In most cases, you have the right to look at or get a copy of your health information. There may be a charge for the copies.

*Amend Information:* If you believe that information in your record is incorrect, or if important information is missing, you have the right to request that we correct the existing information or add the missing information.

*Accounting of Disclosures:* You may request a list of instances where we have disclosed health information about you for reasons other than treatment, payment, or health care operations.

### **Our Legal Duty**

We are required by law to protect and maintain the privacy of your health information, to provide this Notice about our legal duties and privacy practices regarding protected health information, and to abide by the terms of the Notice currently in effect.

### **Changes in Privacy Practices**

We may change our policies at any time. Before we make a significant change in our policies, we will change our Notice and post the new Notice in the admissions area. You can also request a copy of our Notice at any time. For more information about our privacy practices, contact the person listed below.

### **Complaints**

If you are concerned that we have violated your privacy rights, or if you disagree with a decision we made about your records, you may contact the person listed below. You also may send a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The person listed below will provide you with the appropriate address upon request. You will not be penalized in any way for filing a complaint.

### **Contact Person**

If you have any questions, requests, or complaints, please contact:  
Privacy Officer  
128 Lehua St., Wahiawa, HI 96786  
808-621-8411

### **Independent Contractors**

Wahiawa General Hospital and the physicians who practice at the hospital are independent contractors and do not hereby assume any liability for the services or conduct of each other.

**Effective Date:** The effective date of this Notice is April 14, 2003.