

Notice of Privacy Policy

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

Introduction:

At VP Surgery Center of Auburn dba MultiCare Cascade Surgical Center (MCSC), we are committed to treating and using protected health information (PHI) about you responsibly. This Notice of Health Information Practices describes the personal information we collect, and how we use or disclose that information. It also describes your rights as they relate to your PHI. This Notice is effective July 1, 2019 and applies to all PHI as defined by the federal regulations.

Understanding your health record/information:

Each time you visit MCSC, a record of your visit is made. Typically, this record contains your symptoms, examination, test results, diagnoses, treatments, and a plan for future care or treatment. This information, often referred to as your health or medical record, serves as a:

- Basis for planning your care and treatment,
- Means of communication among the many health professionals who contribute to your care,
- Legal document describing the care you received,
- Means by which you or a third-party payer can verify that services billed were actually provided,
- A tool in educating health professionals,
- A source of data for medical research,
- A source of information for public health officials charged with improving the health of the states and the nation,
- A source of data for our planning and marketing,
- A tool with which we can assess and continually work to improve the care we render and the outcomes we achieve.

Understanding what is in your record and how your health information is used helps you to ensure its accuracy, better understand who, what, when, where, and why others may access your health information, and make more informed decisions when authorizing disclosure to others.

We are part of MultiCare Connected Care Network, which is an organized healthcare arrangement (OHCA). An OHCA is (i) a clinically integrated setting in which individuals typically receive healthcare from more than one healthcare provider or (ii) an organized system of healthcare in which more than one healthcare provider participates. The healthcare providers who participate in the OHCA will share medical and billing information about you with one another as may be necessary to carry out treatment, payment, and healthcare operations activities.

Your health information rights:

Although your health record is the physical property of MCSC, the information belongs to you. You have the right to:

- Obtain a paper copy of this notice of information practices upon request,
- Inspect and copy your health record as provided for in 45 CFR 164.524,
- Amend your health record as provided in 45 CFR 164.528,
- Obtain an accounting of disclosures of your health information as provided in 45 CFR 164.528,
- Request communications of your health information by alternative means or at alternative locations,
- Request a restriction on certain uses and disclosures of your information as provided by 45 CFR 164.522, and
- Revoke your authorization to use or disclose health information except to the extent that action has already been taken.

Our responsibilities:

MultiCare Cascade Surgical Center is required to:

- Maintain the privacy of your health information,
- Provide you with this notice as our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to information we collect and maintain about you,
- Abide by the terms of this notice,
- Notify you if we are unable to agree to a requested restriction, and
- Accommodate reasonable requests you may have to communicate health information by alternative means or at alternative locations.

We reserve the right to change our practices and to make the new provisions effective for all PHI we maintain. Should our information practices change, we will mail a revised notice to the address you have supplied to us. We will not use or disclose your PHI without your authorization, excepts as described in this notice. We will also discontinue to use or disclose your PHI after we have received a written revocation of the authorization according to the procedures included in the authorization.

For more information or to report a problem:

If you have questions and would like additional information, you may contact the practice's Privacy Officer at 253-833-7750.

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you can file a complaint with the practice's Privacy Officer, or with the Office for Civil Rights, US Department of Health and Human Services. There will be no retaliation for filing a complaint with either the Privacy Officer or the Office for Civil Rights. The address for the OCR is listed below:

Office of Civil Rights
US Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, DC 20201

Examples of disclosures for treatment, payment and health operations:

We will use your health information for treatment.

For example: Information obtained by a nurse, physician, or other member of your healthcare team will be recorded in your record and used to determine the course of treatment that should work best for you. Your physician will document in your record his expectations of the members of your healthcare team. Members of your healthcare team will then record the actions they took and their observations. In that way, the physician will know how you are responding to the treatment.

We will use your health information for payment.

For example: A bill may be sent to you or a third-party payer. The information on or accompanying the bill may include information that identifies you, as well as your diagnosis, procedure and supplies used.

We will use your health information for regular health operations.

For example: Members of the medical staff, the risk/quality improvement manager, or members of the quality improvement teams may use information in your health record to assess the care and outcomes in your case and others like it. This information will then be used in an effort to continually improve the quality and effectiveness of the healthcare and service we provide.

Business associates: There are some services provided in our organization through contact with business associates. Examples include certain laboratory tests and a copy service we use when making copies of your health record. When these services are contracted, we may disclose your health information to our business associate so that they can perform the job we have asked them to do and bill you or your third-party payer for services rendered. We require the business associate to appropriately safeguard your information.

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 condition.

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 the person's involvement in your care or payment related to your care.

Research: We may disclose information to researchers when an institutional review board that has reviewed the research protocol and established protocols to ensure the privacy of your health information has approved their research.

Marketing: We may contact you to provide appointment reminders or information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

Workers compensation: We may disclose health information to the extent authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with laws relating to workers compensation or other similar programs established by the law.

Public health: As required by law, we may disclose your health information to the public health or legal authorities charged with preventing or controlling disease, injury, or disability.

Law enforcement: We may disclose health information for law enforcement purposes as required by law or in response to a valid subpoena. Federal law makes provision for your health information to be released to an appropriate health oversight agency, public health authority or attorney, provided with a work force member or business associate believes in good faith that we have engaged in unlawful conduct or have otherwise violated professional or clinical standards and are potentially endangering one or more patients, workers, or the public.