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optometry

GENERAL PRIVACY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The law requires us to keep our patients' protected health information (PHI) private in accordance with our Notice of Privacy Practices. Our practice takes our patients' privacy seriously and expects our employees, agents, and business associates to do the same. If you ever have any questions regarding privacy or security of a patient's PHI please contact our Privacy Officer.

In all cases in which we use or disclose a patient's PHI we will do so only to the minimum extent necessary to accomplish the underlying purpose of the use or disclosure. We may use the PHI for treatment, payment, or health care operations. This means that we may share information to other physicians or health care providers involved with the medical services provided to that patient. We may also use PHI in order to collect payment for the services we provide to our patients. We may use PHI as part of quality assurance audits, accreditation, certification, licensing or credentialing activities.

If we have received written authorization from a patient, we may use PHI for any purpose consistent with that authorization. We may not require such an authorization as a condition of treatment. A patient may revoke an authorization by writing to the privacy officer, but it will not affect any prior authorized uses or disclosures.

With the patient's permission, or in some emergencies, we may disclose PHI to family members, friends, or other people to aid in the treatment or collection of payment. We may also use PHI if it is determined to be reasonably necessary or in the patient's best interests for such purposes as allowing a person acting on the patient's behalf to receive filled prescriptions or optical supplies.

We may also use PHI to assist any public or private entity authorized by law or by its charter to assist in disaster relief efforts. We must also use this information when we are required by law to do so. For example, PHI may be released when required by workers' compensation, public health, administrative orders, subpoenas, certain discovery requests, or other laws, regulations, or legal processes. Under certain circumstances we may disclose to law enforcement officials or correctional institutions regarding an inmate, lawful detainee, suspect, fugitive, material witness, missing person or a victim or suspected victim of abuse, neglect, domestic violence or other crimes. We may also disclose to the military authorities, intelligence, counterintelligence and other national security activities.

In most cases patients have the right to review or purchase copies of their PHI by requesting copies in writing. All such requests should be handled quickly and efficiently, but should not interfere with our treatment of other patients.

We are required to maintain a Disclosure Accounting log of the instances, if any, in which PHI is disclosed for purpose other than those described above. For each 12 month period a patient has the right, upon request, to receive one free copy of an accounting certain details surrounding such disclosures that occurred after April 13, 2003. If a patient requests this more than once in a 12 month period there will be a fee for this service. A patient may request that we place additional restrictions of our use of PHI, but we are not required to honor such a request.

I have read the above information regarding PHI and I am familiar with and understand these policies.

Signature _____ Date _____