

# 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.** We will refer to ourselves simply as “Common Ground Healthcare Cooperative (CGHC)” in this notice.

## Your Rights

**When it comes to your health information, you have certain rights:**

Get a copy of your health and claims records

- You can ask to see or get a copy of your health and claims records. You can also get other health information we have about you. Ask us how to do this.
- We will give you a copy or a summary of your health and claims records. We often do this within 30 days of your request. We may charge a fair, cost-based fee.

Ask us to fix health and claims records

- You can ask us to fix your health and claims records if you think they are wrong or not complete. Ask us how to do this.
- We may say “no” to your request. If we do, we will tell you why in writing within 60 days.

Ask for private communications

- You can ask us to contact you in a specific way, such as home or office phone. You can ask us to send mail to a different address.
- We will think about all fair requests. We must say “yes” if you tell us you would be in danger if we do not.

Ask us to limit what we use or share

- You can ask us not to use or share certain health information for care, payment, or our operations.
- We do not have to agree to your request. We may say “no” if it would affect your care or for certain other reasons.

Get a list of those with whom we’ve shared information

- You can ask for a list (accounting) of the times we’ve shared your health information. This is limited to six years before the date you ask. You may ask who we shared it with, and why.

- We will include all the disclosures except for those about:
  - care,
  - payment(s),
  - health care operations, and
  - certain other disclosures (such as any you asked us to make).

We will give you one list each year for free. If you ask for another within 12 months, we will charge a fair, cost-based fee.

#### Get a copy of this privacy notice

- You can ask for a paper copy of this notice at any time. You can ask even if you have agreed to get the notice electronically. We will give you a paper copy promptly.

#### Give CGHC consent to speak to someone on your behalf

- You can give CGHC consent to talk about your health information with someone else on your behalf.
- If you have a legal guardian, that person can use your rights and make choices about your health information. CGHC will give out health information to your legal guardian. We will make sure a legal guardian has this right and can act for you. We will do this before we take any action.

#### File a complaint if you feel your rights are violated

- You can complain if you feel we have violated your rights by contacting us. Use the information at the end of this notice.
- You can file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights. You can send a letter to 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201, call 1-877-696-6775, or visit [www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/complaints/](http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/complaints/).
- We will not take action against you for filing a complaint. We may not require you to give up your right to file a complaint as a condition of:
  - care,
  - payment,
  - enrollment in a health plan, or
  - eligibility for benefits.

## Your Choices

For certain health information, you can tell us your choices about what we share. If you have a clear choice for how we share your information in the situations described below, talk to us. Tell us what you want us to do. We will follow your instructions.

#### **In these cases, you have both the right and choice to tell us to:**

- Share information with your family, close friends, or others involved in payment for your care
- Share information in a disaster relief situation

*If you are not able to tell us your choice, such as if you are unconscious, we may go ahead and share your information. We may share it if we believe it is in your best interest. We may also share your information when needed to lessen a serious and close threat to health or safety.*

**In these cases we often cannot share your information unless you give us written consent:**

- Marketing purposes
- Sale of your information
- Disclosure of psychotherapy notes

## **Consent to Share Health Information**

CGHC shares your health information, including Sensitive Health Information (SHI). SHI can be information related to drug and/or alcohol treatment, genetic testing results, HIV/AIDS, mental health, sexually transmitted diseases (STD), or communicable/other diseases that are a danger to your health. This information is shared to handle your care and treatment or to help with benefits. This information is shared with your past, current, and future treating providers. It is also shared with Health Information Exchanges (HIE). An HIE lets providers view information that CGHC has about members. You have the right to tell CGHC you do not want your health information (including SHI) shared. If you do not agree to share your health information, it will not be shared with providers to handle your care and treatment or to help with benefits. It will be shared with the provider who treats you for the specific SHI. If you do not approve sharing, all providers helping care for you may not be able to manage your care as well as they could if you did approve sharing.

## **Other Uses and Disclosures**

**How do we typically use or share your health information?** We typically use or share your health information in these ways:

Help you get health care treatment

- We can use your health information and share it with experts who are treating you
  - **Example:** *We may arrange more care for you based on information sent to us by your doctor.*

Run our organization

- We can use and give out your information to run our company. We use it to contact you when needed.
- We are not allowed to use genetic information to decide whether we will give you coverage. We cannot use it to decide the price of that coverage.
  - **Example:** *We may use your information to review and improve the quality of health care you and others get. We may give your health information to outside groups so they can assist us with our business. Such outside groups include lawyers, accountants, consultants and others. We require them to keep your health information private, too.*

## Pay for your health care

- We can use and give out your health information as we pay for your health care.
  - **Example:** *We share information about your vision plan to pay for vision services.*

**How else can we use or share your health information?** We are allowed or required to share your information in other ways. These ways are often to help the public good, such as public health and research. We have to meet many conditions in the law before we can share your information for these reasons. For more information see:

[www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/consumers/index.html](http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/consumers/index.html)

## To help with public health and safety issues

- We can share health information about you for certain reasons such as:
  - Preventing disease
  - Helping with product recalls
  - Reporting harmful reactions to drugs
  - Reporting suspected abuse, neglect, or domestic violence
  - Preventing or reducing a serious threat to anyone's health or safety

## To do research

- We can use or share your information for health research. We can do this as long as certain privacy rules are met.

## To obey the law

- We will share information about you if state or federal laws require it. This includes the Department of Health and Human Services if it wants to see that we are obeying federal privacy laws.

## To respond to organ and tissue donation requests

- We can share health information about you with organ procurement organizations.

## To work with a medical examiner or funeral director

- We can share health information with a coroner, medical examiner, or funeral director when a person dies.

## To address workers' compensation, law enforcement, and other government requests

- We can use or share health information about you:
  - For workers' compensation claims
  - For law enforcement purposes or with a law enforcement official
  - With health oversight agencies for activities allowed by law
  - For special government functions such as military, national security, and presidential protective services

## To respond to lawsuits and legal actions

- We can share health information about you in response to a court or administrative order, or in response to a court order.

We may also make a collection of "de-identified" information that cannot be traced back to you.

## Our Responsibilities

- We protect our members' health information in many ways. This includes information that is written, spoken or available online using a computer.
  - CGHC employees are trained on how to protect member information.
  - Member information is spoken in a way so that it is not inappropriately overheard.
  - CGHC makes sure that computers used by employees are safe by using firewalls and passwords.
  - CGHC limits who can access member health information. We make sure that only those employees with a business reason to access information use and share that information.
- We are required by law to keep the privacy and security of your protected health information. We are required to give you a copy of this notice.
- We will let you know quickly if a breach occurs that may have compromised the privacy or security of your information.
- We must follow the duties and privacy practices described in this notice. We must give you a copy of it.
- We will not use or share your information other than as listed here unless you tell us we can in writing. If you tell us we can, you may change your mind at any time. Let us know in writing if you change your mind.

For more information see:

[www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/consumers/noticepp.html](http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/consumers/noticepp.html).

### **Effective date and changes to the terms of this notice**

The original notice was effective September 20, 2016, and this version was effective January 1, 2025. We must follow the terms of this notice as long as it is in effect. If needed, we can change the notice. The new one would apply to all health information we keep. If this happens, the new notice will be available upon request. It will also be posted on our web site. You can ask for a paper copy of our notice at any time by mailing a request to our Privacy Officer.

### **The CGHC Privacy Officer can be reached by:**

Mail: Common Ground Healthcare Cooperative  
Attn: Privacy Officer  
P.O. Box 8738  
Dayton, OH 45401-8738

Email: [HIPAAPrivacyOfficer@caresource.com](mailto:HIPAAPrivacyOfficer@caresource.com)

Phone: **1-877-514-2442** (TTY: 711)

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