

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.**

Your Rights

When it comes to your health information, you have certain rights. This section explains your rights and some of our responsibilities to help you.

Get an electronic or paper copy of your medical record

- You can ask to see or get an electronic or paper copy of your medical record and other health information we have about you. Ask us how to do this.
 - We will provide a copy or a summary of your health information, usually within 30 days of your request. We may charge a reasonable, cost-based fee.
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Ask us to correct your medical record

- You can ask us to correct health information about you that you think is incorrect or incomplete. Ask us how to do this.
 - We may say “no” to your request, but we’ll tell you why in writing within 60 days.
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Request confidential communications

- You can ask us to contact you in a specific way (for example, home or office phone, email or text message) or to send mail to a different address.
 - We will say “yes” to all reasonable requests. Communication by text message is not secure or encrypted, and there exists the risk of exposure of confidential information. TOA uses encrypted email for confidential email communication. This secures the email, but does not reduce the risk of exposure completely.
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Ask us to limit what we use or share

- You can ask us not to use or share certain health information for treatment, payment, or our operations.
 - We are not required to agree to your request, and we may say “no” if it would affect your care.
 - If you pay for a service or health care item out-of-pocket in full, you can ask us not to share that information for payment or our operations with your health insurer.
 - We will say “yes” unless a law requires us to share that information.
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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 for six years prior to the date you ask, who we shared it with, and why.
 - We will include all the disclosures except for those about treatment, payment, and health care operations, and certain other disclosures (such as any you asked us to make). We’ll provide one accounting a year for free but will charge a reasonable, cost-based fee if you ask for another one within 12 months.
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Get a copy of this privacy notice

- You can ask for a paper copy of this notice at any time, and we will provide you with one promptly.

Your Rights, continued

Choose someone to act for you

- If you have given someone medical power of attorney or if someone is your legal guardian, that person can exercise your rights and make choices about your health information.
- We will make sure the person has this authority and can act for you 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 using the information on the last page.
- You can file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights by sending a letter to:
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20201
by calling: 1-877-696-6775 or by visiting www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/complaints/.
- We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

Your Choices

For certain health information, you can tell us your choices about what we share. If you have a clear preference for how we share your information in the situations described below, talk to us. Tell us what you want us to do, and 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 your care
- Share information in a disaster relief situation
- Include your information in a hospital directory
- Contact you for fundraising efforts
- Share your mental health/HIV information with Health Infonet Exchange

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

In these cases we *never* share your information unless you give us written permission:

- Marketing purposes
- Sale of your information
- Most sharing of psychotherapy notes

In the case of fundraising:

- We may contact you for fundraising efforts, but you can tell us not to contact you again.

If you have any questions, wish to discuss a grievance or complaint, or would like to request an electronic copy of this Notice, please contact:

Erin Nadeau, Director of Licensing and Compliance
The Opportunity Alliance
50 Lydia Lane
South Portland, ME 04106 (207) 523-5004

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Other Uses and Disclosures

How do we typically use or share your health information? We typically use or share your health information in the following ways.

Treat you	We can use your health information and share it with other professionals who are treating you.	Example: A doctor treating you for an injury asks another doctor about your overall health condition.
Run our organization	We can use and share your health information to run our practice, improve your care, and contact you when necessary.	Example: We use health information about you to manage your treatment and services.
Bill for your services	We can use and share your health information to bill and get payment from health plans or other entities.	Example: We give information about you to your health insurance plan so it will pay for your services.

How else can we use or share your health information?

We are allowed or required to share your information in other ways – usually in ways that contribute to the public good, such as public health and research. We must meet many conditions in the law before we can share your information for these purposes. See:

www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/consumers/index.html.

Help with public health and safety issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We can share health information about you for certain situations such as:• Preventing disease• Helping with product recalls• Reporting adverse reactions to medications• Reporting suspected abuse, neglect or domestic violence• Preventing or reducing a serious threat to anyone's health or safety
Do research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We can use or share your info for health research.
Comply with the law	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will share information about you if state or federal laws require it, including with the Department of Health and Human Services if it wants to see that we're complying with federal privacy law.
Respond to organ and tissue donation requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We can share health information about you with organ procurement organizations.
Work with a medical examiner or funeral director	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We can share health information with a coroner, medical examiner, or funeral director when an individual dies.
Address workers' compensation, law enforcement, and other government requests	We can use or share health information about you: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For workers' compensation claims• For law enforcement purposes or with a law enforcement official• With health oversight agencies for activities authorized by law

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For special government functions, such as military, national security, and presidential protective services
Respond to lawsuits and legal actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We can share health information about you in response to a court or administrative order, or in response to subpoena.
Health Information Exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We participate in HealthInfoNet, the statewide health information exchange (HIE) designated by the State of Maine. The HIE is a secure computer system for health care providers to share your important health information to support treatment and continuity of care. For example, if you are admitted to a health care facility not affiliated with The Opportunity Alliance, health care providers there will be able to see important health information held in our electronic medical record systems. • Your record in the HIE includes prescriptions, lab and test results, imaging reports, conditions, diagnoses or health problems. For clients participating in our Behavioral Health Home programs, this also includes your Plan of Care. To ensure your health information is entered into the correct record, also included are your full name and birth date. All information contained in the HIE is kept private and used in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations. The information is accessible to participating providers to support treatment and healthcare operations. • You do not have to participate in the Health Information Exchange to receive care. For more information about HealthInfoNet and your choices regarding participation, visit www.hinfonet.org or call toll-free 1-866-592-4352.
Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We enter data into HMIS (Homeless Management Information System), a portal that manages information about our homeless population, designated by the State of Maine. HMIS is a secure, encrypted portal. Your information is protected by local, state and federal regulations governing the confidentiality of client records, and cannot be disclosed without written consent unless otherwise provided for in the regulations. • Your record in HMIS includes demographic information, where you have been staying, and issues underlying homelessness.

- By sharing your information with other agencies using HMIS, you may receive services faster, be able to avoid being screened again, and minimize how many times you must tell your story. You also help agencies document the need for services and funding. This will enhance the community's ability to provide the most effective services and housing possible.