

## HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices for Protected Health Information

### Background

The Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule provides federal protections for personal health information held by covered entities and gives patients an array of rights with respect to that information. At the same time, the Privacy Rule is balanced so that it permits the disclosure of personal health information needed for patient care and other important purposes.

The Security Rule specifies a series of safeguards for covered entities to use to assure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of electronic protected health information.

### How the Rule Works

**General Rule.** The Privacy Rule provides that an individual has a right to adequate notice of how Destination Hope may use and disclose protected health information about you, as well your rights and the obligations of Destination Hope with respect to that information. Destination Hope has developed and provides you with this notice of our privacy practices.

### Authorized Uses and Disclosures

**Authorization.** Destination Hope must obtain your written authorization for any use or disclosure of protected health information that is not for treatment, payment or health care operations or otherwise permitted or required by the Privacy Rule. Destination Hope may not condition treatment, payment, enrollment, or benefits eligibility on an individual granting an authorization, except in limited circumstances.

An authorization must be written in specific terms. It may allow use and disclosure of protected health information by Destination Hope seeking the authorization, or by a third party. All authorizations must be in plain language, and contain specific information regarding the information to be disclosed or used, the person(s) disclosing and receiving the information, expiration, right to revoke in writing, and other data.

**Psychotherapy Notes.** Destination Hope must obtain your authorization to use or disclose psychotherapy notes with the following exceptions:

- The covered entity who originated the notes may use them for treatment.
- A covered entity may use or disclose, without an individual's authorization, the psychotherapy notes, for its own training, and to defend itself in legal proceedings brought by the individual, for HHS to investigate or determine the covered entity's compliance with the Privacy Rules, to avert a serious and imminent threat to public health or safety, to a health oversight agency for lawful oversight of the originator of the psychotherapy notes, for the lawful activities of a coroner or medical examiner or as required by law.