

## DOUGLAS DENTAL STUDIO

### PRIVACY PRACTICES

We are required by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) to explain to you the ways in which we will use and disclose the information about your health that we obtain in the course of your treatment. The privacy of your health information is very important to us, and we will use that information only in ways that we feel are beneficial to your health. Besides using your information to treat you, we would also like to communicate with you to confirm your appointments, send holiday greetings and newsletters about our practice. We will not sell your information or use it for any marketing purposes. If you have any questions, please ask and we will be happy to explain our policies.

#### Our commitment to your privacy

Our practice is dedicated to maintaining the privacy of your identifiable health information (PHI). In conducting our business, we must create records regarding you and the treatment services we provide you. We are required by law to maintain the confidentiality of health information that identifies you.

We may use and disclose you Individually Identifiable health information (PHI). In the following ways:

- 1) Treatment. The information in your medical records will be used to determine which treatment option best address your health needs. The treatment selected will be documented in your medical records so that other health care professionals can make informed decisions about your care. For example, we may ask you to have an x-ray, and we will use the results to help us reach a diagnosis. Many of the people who work for our practice, including but not limited to the doctors and staff, may use or disclose your PHI in order to treat you or to assist others in your treatment, such as a dental specialist. Additionally, we may disclose your PHI to others who may assist in your care, such as your spouse, children, or parents.
- 2) Payment. Our practice may use and disclose your PHI in order to bill and collect payment for the services and items you may receive from us. For example, we may contact your health insurer or dental plan to certify that you are eligible for benefits (and for what range of benefits), and we may provide your insurer with details regarding your treatment to determine if your insurer will pay for your treatment. We also may use and disclose your PHI to obtain payment from third parties that may be responsible for such costs such as a family member. Also, we may use your PHI bill you directly for services and items. We may disclose your PHI to other health care providers to assist in their billing and collection efforts.
- 3) Appointments and reminders. Our practice may use and disclose your PHI to contact you and remind you of an appointment or as a follow up on treatment. For example, we may send appointment reminders and recall cards to remind you of an upcoming office visit by mail, phone, or e-mail.
- 4) Non-medical communications. Our practice may use your PHI to contact you for non-medical reasons. For example, we may send you a thank you card, newsletter, or other communication via mail.
- 5) Treatment options. Our practice may use and disclose your PHI to inform you of potential treatment options or alternatives.
- 6) Open areas. There are open areas within our office where conversations with you regarding your care may be overheard by others. Every attempt will be made to minimize the exposure of your PHI, and if requested we will locate a private area in our office for our conversations with you.
- 7) Release of Information to family and friends. Our practice may release your PHI to a family member who is involved in your care or who assists in taking care of you. For example, parents or guardians may ask a grandparent to take their child to our office for treatment. In that case, the grand parent may have access to that child's medical information.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_