

Botsford Health Care Continuum*

PRIVACY NOTICE



Effective April 14, 2003

This notice describes how personal and medical information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information.

Please review it carefully.

USES AND DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION

We may use health information about you for treatment (such as sending your medical record information to a specialist physician as part of a referral), to obtain payment for treatment (such as sending billing information to a health insurance plan), for administrative purposes, and to evaluate the quality of care that you receive (such as comparing patient data to improve treatment methods).

We may use or disclose identifiable health information about you without your authorization for several other reasons. Subject to certain requirements, we may give out health information without your authorization for public health purposes, abuse or neglect reporting, auditing purposes, research studies, funeral arrangements and organ donation, workers' compensation purposes and emergencies. We provide information when otherwise required by law, such as for law enforcement in specific circumstances. We may also contact you about appointment reminders or treatment alternatives or to raise funds. In any other situation, we will ask for your written authorization before using or disclosing any identifiable health information about you. If you choose to sign an authorization to disclose information, you can later revoke that authorization to stop any further uses and disclosures.

We may change our policies at any time. As we make a significant change in our policies, we will change our notice and post the new notice in the

waiting area, in each examination room, and on our Web site. You can also request a copy of our notice at any time. For more information about our privacy practices, contact our Compliance and Privacy Officer.



INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

In most cases, you have the right to look at or get a copy of health information about you that we use to make decisions about you. If you request copies we will charge you .25¢ for each page. You also have the right to receive a list of instances where we have disclosed health information about you for reasons other than treatment, payment, or related administrative purposes. If you believe that information in your record is incorrect or if important information is missing, you have the right to request that we correct the existing information or add the missing information.

You have the right to request that your health information be communicated to you in a confidential manner such as sending mail to an address other than your home. If this notice was provided to you electronically, you may obtain a paper copy of the notice.

You may request in writing that we not use or disclose your information for treatment, to obtain payment, or administrative purposes, nor to persons involved in your care, except when specifically authorized by you, when required by law, or in emergency circumstances. We will consider your request but are not legally required to accept it.



COMPLAINTS

If you are concerned that we have violated your privacy rights, or you disagree with a decision we made about access to your records, you may contact our Compliance and Privacy Officer. You may also send a written complaint to the Secretary of Health and Human Services. Our Compliance and Privacy Officer can provide you with the appropriate address upon request. Under no circumstance will you be retaliated against for filing a complaint.



OUR LEGAL DUTY

We are required by law to protect the privacy of your information, to provide this notice about our information practices, and to follow the information practices that are described in this notice.



MICHIGAN LAW

The State law of Michigan is more stringent than the federal privacy law in several areas. State law is more stringent when the individual is entitled to greater access to records than under the federal privacy law. Certain other federal laws are also more stringent than the federal privacy law. Botsford Health Care Continuum will continue to abide by these more stringent state and federal laws. The federal laws include applicable Internet privacy laws, such as the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act and the federal laws and regulations governing the confidentiality of health information regarding substance abuse treatment.

EXAMPLE: In Michigan patients have more rights of access to behavioral health information under Michigan law than under the federal privacy law. The state law defines the minimum necessary standard for release of mental health information. Disclosure is permitted with consent and for treatment without consent but only in an emergency. Minors in Michigan have more rights to confidentiality and protection of certain information (reproductive health, behavioral health and substance abuse) than under the federal privacy law. State law requires facilities to adopt policies regarding release of information outside the facility. If the facility policy requires consent for release then consent will be required. State law genetic and HIV testing and disclosure consents remain in place. Additionally, under the state law consent is required for disclosure related to genetic or HIV testing.

This Notice is part one of a two-part notice. The second part of the Notice contains specific privacy information for the facility. If you would like to see the second part of the notice which contains more detail on any of the facilities noted with the * below, this notice will be provided at time of service or upon request:

Compliance and Privacy Officer
Botsford Health Care Continuum
28050 Grand River Avenue
Farmington Hills, MI 48336

Compliance and Privacy Direct Line
(877) 471-2422

www.botsfordsystem.org

* **An Organized Health Care Arrangement:**

(For compliance with the federal privacy law only) Botsford General Hospital, Botsford Clinic System, Botsford Continuing Care Corporation, Botsford Continuing Health Center, Community EMS, Botsford Health Plan, Botsford Kidney Center, Community Ambulance Service, Regional EMS, and Healthlink.