

Washington Regional Cardiac Surgery Notice of Privacy Practices

What is PHI?

PHI stands for *Protected Health Information*. This is individually identifiable information (including demographic information) relating to your health, to the healthcare provided you, or to payment for health care.

The use and disclosure of your PHI

Washington Regional Cardiac Surgery (WRCS) may use and disclose your PHI, without authorization, for treatment, payment and healthcare operations. These include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

For treatment purposes:

- consulting or referring physicians involved in your treatment
- referral to nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, home health agencies and/or other physicians or other medical providers involved in your care
- to contact you regarding future appointments, subject to any restrictions placed by you

For healthcare operations purposes:

- internal quality control and assurance, including auditing of records

For payment purposes:

- insurance companies for claims, including coordination of benefits with other insurers
- collection agencies

WRCS may be required to use or disclose your PHI without your written consent or authorization in circumstances such as for public health requirements or court orders.

WRCS will not make any other use or disclosure of your PHI without your written authorization. This authorization may be revoked by you, in writing, at any time.

Your rights regarding the use and disclosure of your protected health information

You have the right to request restrictions on uses and disclosures of your PHI. Every effort will be made to respect your wishes, however, WRCS is not required to agree to your restrictions, and in certain situations such as emergencies, those restrictions may not be followed. Your request for restrictions must be made in writing.

You have the right to request different ways for our office to communicate with you. For example, you may request that we contact you exclusively at your work address or phone number. Your request must be made in writing.

You have the right to view and to copy your PHI. Your request must be in made in writing and we may charge you related fees for this service. There are certain situations in which we are not required to comply with your request. Should this occur, you will receive a written explanation for the denial.

You have a right to request an amendment of your PHI. Your request must be in writing and must explain your reason(s) for the amendment. Should WRCS deny your request, we will provide a written explanation to you.

You have a right to a written listing of disclosures of your PHI **except** those made for the following uses:

- For your treatment
- For billing and collection of payment for your treatment
- For our health care operations
- Made to or requested by you, or that you authorized
- Allowed or required by law

The list will include the date of the disclosure, the name of the person or organization receiving the information, a brief description of the information disclosed, and the purpose of the disclosure. You may ask for disclosures made up to six (6) years before your request (not including disclosures made prior to April 14, 2003).

You have the right to a copy of this notice. WRCS may revise the terms of this Notice of Privacy Practices at any time. If this occurs, any earlier versions will become void. You may request a copy of any revised notice by contacting WRCS in writing.

You have the right to file a complaint to WRCS or to the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services about our privacy practices. WRCS will not make any retaliatory action against any individual who submits or conveys a complaint of suspected or actual non-compliance of the privacy standards.

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated by us, you may contact the HIPAA Privacy Officer at the address listed below:

HIPAA Privacy Officer
Washington Regional Cardiac Surgery
106 Irving Street, NW - Suite #316
Washington, DC 20010

Telephone: 202-291-1430 Fax: 202-291-1436

Effective date of this notice: 04/14/03