

Rights to privacy and confidentiality

There is a legal privilege in protecting the confidentiality of the information that you share with your therapist and exceptions to that protection. There are some situations when your therapist is permitted or required by law to disclose information without your consent or authorization. These situations are unusual in psychotherapy. If one of these situations arises, this therapist will make every effort to fully discuss it with you before taking any action and this therapist will try to limit the disclosure to what is necessary. These exceptions include:

Authorization

You give me permission to share confidential information.

Safety

If you are to harm yourself or others, your therapist may be obligated to seek appropriate help for you, or to contact family members or others who can help provide protection or notify other appropriate authorities. Also, if your therapist knows or suspects that a child, elderly person, or disabled person has been abused or neglected, the law requires that a report be filed with the appropriate government agency.

Legal Proceedings

If you are involved in a court proceeding and a request is made for information concerning your diagnosis and treatment, such information is protected by law. Your therapist cannot provide any information without your (or your legal representative's) written authorization, or a court order. If you are involved or contemplating litigation, you should consult with your attorney to determine whether a court would be likely to order your therapist to disclose information. However, if a patient files a complaint or lawsuit against this, I may disclose relevant information regarding that patient in order to defend myself.

Right to choose a therapist

You have the right to choose a therapist who best suits your needs and purposes. You may seek a second opinion from another mental health practitioner or may terminate therapy at any time. You also have a right to know the professional training and credentials of your therapist.

Right to raise questions about therapy

You have the right to ask questions about your treatment at any time. Your feelings and feedback about the therapeutic process are always a primary concern. Discussion about your experience and the therapeutic process is often beneficial to therapy.

Following are some examples of questions you may want to ask:

- What are the benefits and risks of my treatment?
- Are there alternative treatments?
- How likely is my treatment to be successful?
- If I am unhappy with my therapy or with you, what do I do about it?

Right to terminate therapy

You can end therapy at any time. While psychotherapy can be extremely helpful, not everyone finds therapy successful, and on rare occasions, due to the nature of therapy, some problems are made worse.

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. If you have any questions about the information contained in this Notice, please contact your therapist. Your therapist is required by law to maintain the privacy of your health information ("Protected Health Information" or "PHI") and to provide you with Notice of their legal duties and privacy practices with respect to your health information. Your therapist is also required to abide by the terms of this Notice so long as it remains in effect. Your therapist reserves the right to change the terms of the Notice of Privacy Practices as necessary and to make the new Notice effective for all personal health information maintained by them. You may receive a copy of any revised Notices from your therapist or a copy may be obtained online at sacredground.co.

Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information

For Treatment

Your PHI may be used and disclosed by those involved in your care for the purpose of providing, coordinating, or managing your health care treatment and related services. Your therapist will ask you to sign a Release of Information form before they consult with other health care professionals. They cannot disclose PHI to any other health care professional without your authorization.

For Payment

Your therapist may use and disclose PHI so they can receive payment for treatment and services provided to you. This will be done only with your written authorization. This includes filing for insurance benefits and processing claims. If it becomes necessary to use collection processes due to lack of payment, your therapist will disclose only the minimum amount of PHI necessary for purposes of collection.

For Health Care Options

Your therapist may use or disclose your PHI to support their business activities including, but not limited to, quality assessment activities, licensing, and credentialing. Your therapist may share your PHI with third parties that perform various business activities (i.e. accounting to billing services) provided they have a written contract with the business that requires it to safeguard the privacy of your PHI.

Required by Law

Under the law, your therapist must disclose your PHI to you upon request. In addition, they must disclose to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services for the purpose of investigating or determining our compliance with requirements of the Privacy Rule.

Without Authorization

Applicable law and ethical standards permit disclosure of information about you without your authorization in a limited number of other situations. Types of uses and disclosures that may be made without your authorization are as follows:

- Required by Law or mandatory Government Agency audits or investigations
- Required by Court Order
- Necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health and safety of a person or the public. If information is disclosed to prevent or lessen a serious threat, it will be disclosed to a person or persons reasonably able to prevent or lessen the threat, including the target of the threat.

Minors

If you are a minor, information regarding illegal or harmful acts may be released to a parent or guardian. If a minor discloses information about neglect or abuse the law requires that a report be filed with the appropriate government agency.

Verbal Permission

Your therapist may use or disclose your information to family members that are directly involved in your treatment with your verbal permission.

With Authorization

Uses and disclosures that are not specifically permitted by applicable law will be made only with your written authorization. You have the right to revoke your authorization any time by writing your therapist with your request.

Your Rights Regarding Your Protected Health Information (PHI):

You have the following rights regarding PHI that I maintain about you. To exercise any of these rights, please submit your request in writing to me.

Right of Access to Inspect and Copy

You have the right, which may be restricted only in exceptional circumstance, to inspect and copy PHI that may be used to make decisions about your care. Restrictions apply only in those situations where compelling evidence indicates that access would cause serious harm to you. If you are a parent or legal guardian of a minor, please note that certain portions of the minor's record will not be accessible to you. Your therapist may share a reasonable, cost-based fee for copies.

Right to Amend

If you feel the PHI your therapist has about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask your therapist to amend the information although they are not required to agree to the amendment.

Right to an Accounting of Disclosures

You may obtain an accounting of certain disclosures of PHI made by your therapist. This right applies to disclosures other than those already mentioned.

Right to Request Restrictions

You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the use or disclosure of your PHI for treatment, payment, or health care operations. Your therapist is not required to agree to any restriction you request.

Right to Request Accounting of Disclosures

You have the right to request that your therapist communicate with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location.

Right to a Copy of the Notice

You have the right to a paper copy of this Notice.

Questions and Complaints

If you desire further information about your privacy rights, or are concerned that your therapist has violated your privacy rights, you may contact them. You may also file written complaints with the Director, Office for Civil Rights or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Your therapist will not retaliate against you if you file a complaint with the Director or your therapist.

Effective Date and Changes to this Notice

This Notice is effective January 1, 2015. Your therapist may change the terms of this Notice at any time. If your therapist changes this Notice, they will post the revised Notice on the website sacredground.co. You may also obtain any revised notice by contacting this therapist.