

*Northern Illinois University*  
*Health Services*  
*A Division of Student Affairs*

*Notice of Privacy*  
*Practices*

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

*Please read carefully.*

### **Understanding Your Health Information**

Each time you visit a hospital, physician, or other healthcare provider, a record of your visit is made. Typically, this record contains your symptoms, examination and test results, diagnoses, treatment, and a plan for future care or treatment. Being aware of what is in your medical record will help you to make more informed decisions when authorizing disclosure to others.

Your medical record serves as a:

- basis for planning your care and treatment.
- means of communication among the many health professionals who contribute to your care.
- legal document describing the care you received.
- tool with which we can assess and continually work to improve the care we render and the outcomes we achieve.
- means by which you or an insurance company can verify that services billed were actually provided.
- source of data for facility planning and marketing services.
- source of information for public health officials charged with improving the health of the nation.

### **Your Health Information Rights**

Although your medical record is the physical property of Northern Illinois University, Health Services the protected health information it contains belongs to you. You have the right to:

- inspect and obtain a copy of your health information; copy charges may apply.
- amend your health information.
- revoke your special authorizations to use or disclose health information except to the extent that action has already been taken.
- request a restriction on certain uses and disclosures of your information.
- request an accounting of disclosures of your health information.
- request communications of your protected health information by alternative means or at alternative locations.

### **Northern Illinois University, Health Services will**

- maintain the privacy of your health information.
- provide you with a notice as to our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to information we collect and maintain about you.
- abide by the terms of this notice.
- notify you if we are unable to agree to a requested restriction.
- accommodate reasonable requests you may have to communicate your health information by alternative means or at alternative locations.

We reserve the right to change the terms of this notice and to make the new provisions effective for all protected health information we maintain.

We will not use or disclose your health information without your authorization, except as described in this notice, and as required by Illinois or Federal law.

### **For More Information or to Report a Problem**

If you have questions and/or would like additional information, you may contact the Health Information Manager at (815-753-1311). If you feel the privacy of your health information has been compromised you may contact the Health Services Director at (815-753-1311) and/or the Secretary of Health and Human Services. There will be no retaliation for filing a complaint.

### **Examples of uses or disclosures of your health information for Treatment, Payment and Healthcare Operations**

*We will use your health information for treatment.*

**For example:** Information obtained by a nurse, physician, or other member of your healthcare team will be recorded in your record and used to determine the course of treatment that should work best for you. Members of your healthcare team will record the actions they took and their observations. In that way, the health care team will know how you are responding to treatment.

*We will use your health information for payment.*

**For example:** If you have a charge, you may receive an invoice at the time of the visit. The information on or accompanying the invoice may include information that identifies you, as well as your diagnosis, procedures, and supplies used. If you choose to pay for these charges using your NIU Bursar's account, only the information needed for processing will be released to that office.

*We will use your health information for healthcare operations.*

**For example:** Members of the Health Services staff may use information in your medical record to assess the care and outcomes in your case and others like it. This information will then be used in an effort to continually improve the quality and effectiveness of the health care and service we provide. Where relevant and appropriate, information in your medical records may also be accessible to accountants, attorneys and auditors who will also be responsible for reasonably protecting the privacy of such information.

### **Other Permitted or Required Uses and Disclosures**

***Business associates:*** There are some services provided in our organization through contacts with business associates. Examples include radiology, certain laboratory tests, and computer support. When these services are contracted, we may disclose your health information to our business associates so that they can perform the job we've asked them to do.

Business associates will safeguard your health information.

**Notification:** With your authorization, we may use or disclose health information to notify or assist in notifying a family member, personal representative, or another person responsible for your care about your location and general condition.

**Communication with family:** Health professionals, using their best judgment, may disclose to a family member, other relative, close personal friend or any other person you identify, health information relevant to that person's involvement in your care or payment related to your care.

**Public Health:** As required by law, we may disclose your health information to public health or legal authorities charged with preventing or controlling disease, injury, or disability

**Marketing:** We may contact you to provide appointment reminders, information about treatment alternatives, or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

**Research:** We may disclose health information to researchers when their research has been approved by an institutional review board that has reviewed the research proposal and established protocols to ensure the appropriate privacy of your health information.

**Coroners, Medical examiners, Funeral directors, and Organ procurement organizations:** We may disclose health information consistent with applicable law to carry out their duties.

**Food and Drug Administration (FDA):** We may disclose to the FDA health information relative to adverse events with respect to food, supplements, product and product defects, or post marketing surveillance information to enable product recalls, repairs, or replacement.

**Worker's compensation:** We may disclose health information to the extent authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with laws relating to worker's compensation or other similar programs established by law.

**Correctional institution:** Should you be an inmate of a correctional institution, we may disclose to the institution or agents thereof health information necessary for your health and the health and safety of other individuals (as required by law).

**Law enforcement:** We may disclose health information for law enforcement purposes as required by law or in response to a valid subpoena.

Northern Illinois University Health Services strives to protect your health information. While Health Services is not currently a covered entity under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), we recognize its value and aspire to apply its general principles.

Northern Illinois University is an equal opportunity institution and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, marital status, national origin, disability, or status as a disabled or Vietnam-era veteran. The Constitution and Bylaws of Northern Illinois University afford equal treatment regardless of political views or affiliation, and sexual orientation.