



Ronald K. Crabtree D.D.S., P.A.

## NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

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**THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY. THE PRIVACY OF YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION IS IMPORTANT TO US.**

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### **OUR LEGAL DUTY**

We are required by applicable federal and state law to maintain the privacy of your health information. We are also required to give you this Notice about our privacy practices, our legal duties, and your rights concerning your health information. We must follow the privacy practices that are described in this Notice while it is in effect. This Notice takes effect September 23, 2013, and will remain in effect until we replace it.

We reserve the right to change our privacy practices and the terms of this Notice at any time, provided such changes are permitted by applicable law. We reserve the right to make the changes in our privacy practices and the new terms of our Notice effective for all health information that we maintain, including health information we created or received before we made the changes. When we make a significant change in our privacy practices, we will change this Notice and post the new Notice clearly and prominently at our practice, and we will make the new Notice available upon request.

You may request a copy of our Notice at any time. For more information about our privacy practices, or for additional copies of this Notice, please contact us using the information listed at the end of this Notice.

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**USES AND DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION** - We will use and disclose your health care records for the purpose of treatment, payment and health care operations.

**Treatment** means providing, coordinating, or managing healthcare and related services by one or more health care providers. For example, we may need to share information with other healthcare providers or specialists involved in your care.

**Payment** means such activities as obtaining reimbursement for services, confirming coverage, billing, or collection activities and utilization review. For example we may disclose treatment information when billing a dental plan for dental services provided to you.

**Healthcare Operations** include the business aspects of running our practices. For example, patient information may be used for training purposes or quality assessment.

**Unless you request otherwise**, we may use or disclose health information to a family member, friend, personal representative, or other individual to the extent necessary to help with your health care or with payment for your health care. In the event of an emergency or your incapacity, we will use our professional judgment in disclosing only the protected health information necessary to facilitate needed care. In addition, we may remind you of appointments or that it is time for you to contact us and make an appointment. If you have a health condition that warrants it, appointment postcards may remind you to premedicate prior to your appointment. Additionally, we may contact you to follow up on your care and inform you of treatment options or services that may be of interest to you or your family. These various communications may include postcards, letters, telephone or electronic reminders such as email or text messages. Messages may be left at home and/or work or on your mobile phone. If you were referred to our office by a referral service or marketing organization, we may confirm with them that you have become a patient in our practice. If an individual such as a friend, patient, acquaintance or family member referred you to our practice we may thank them for the referral. If you were referred to our practice by a charitable organization such as Katy Christian Ministries or Texas Dentists for Healthy Smiles, we will use or disclose the minimal necessary health care information to them in order to coordinate your treatment.

**Written Authorization for disclosures of information other than for TPO:** We will obtain your written authorization before using or disclosing your PHI for purposes other than those provided for in this Notice (or as otherwise permitted or required by law). If you give us an authorization, you may revoke it in writing at any time. Your revocation will not affect any use or disclosures permitted by your authorization while it was in effect. Upon receipt of the written revocation, we will stop using or disclosing your PHI, except to the extent that we have already taken action in reliance on the authorization.

**Persons Involved In Care:** We may use or disclose health information to notify, or assist in the notification of (including identifying or locating) a family member, your personal representative or another person responsible for your care, of your location, your general condition, or death. In the event of your incapacity or emergency circumstances, we will disclose health information based on a

determination using our professional judgment disclosing only health information that is directly relevant to the person's involvement in your healthcare. We will also use our professional judgment and our experience with common practice to make reasonable inferences of your best interest in allowing a person to pick up prescriptions, dental supplies, x-rays, or other similar forms of health information.

**Required by Law:** We may use or disclose your health information when we are required to do so by law.

**Abuse or Neglect:** We may disclose your health information to appropriate authorities if we reasonably believe that you are a possible victim of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence or the possible victim of other crimes. We may disclose your health information to the extent necessary to avert a serious threat to your health or safety or the health or safety of others.

**National Security:** We may disclose to military authorities the health information of Armed Forces personnel under certain circumstances. We may disclose to authorized federal officials health information required for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence, and other national security activities. We may disclose to correctional institutions or law enforcement officials having lawful custody of protected health information of an inmate or patient under certain circumstances.

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**PATIENT RIGHTS –** You have certain rights in regards to your protected health information, which you can exercise by presenting a written request to our privacy officer at the practice address listed below. Additionally, forms are available from our office to help facilitate your request. Your specific rights are listed below.

**Access:** You have the right to look at or get copies of your health information, with limited exceptions. You may request that we provide copies in a format other than photocopies. We will use the format you request unless we cannot practically do so. (You must make a request in writing to obtain access to your health information. You may obtain a form to request access by using the contact information listed at the end of this Notice. You may also request access by sending us a letter to the address at the end of this Notice.) If you request copies, we will charge \$25 for the first 20 pages and \$0.50 per page for each copy thereafter. If you request duplicates of radiographs, the duplication charge will be \$25 for panorex or full mouth series, and \$15 per intra oral radiograph. If you request an alternative format, we will charge a cost-based fee for providing your health information in that format. If you prefer, we will prepare a summary or an explanation of your health information for a fee.

**Disclosure Accounting:** You have the right to receive a list of instances in which we or our business associates disclosed your health information for purposes, other than treatment, payment, healthcare operations and certain other activities, for the last 6 years. If you request this accounting more than once in a 12-month period, we may charge you a reasonable, cost-based fee for responding to these additional requests.

**Restriction:** You have the right to request additional restrictions on our use or disclosure of your PHI by submitting a written request to the Privacy Official. Your written request must include (1) what information you want to limit, (2) whether you want to limit our use, disclosure, or both, and (3) to whom you want the limits to apply. **We are not required to agree to your request except in the case where the disclosure is to a health plan for purpose of carrying out payment** or health care operations, and the information pertains solely to a health care item or service for which you, or a person on your behalf (other than the health plan), has paid our practice in full.

**Alternative Communication:** You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your health information by alternative means or to alternative locations. **(You must make your request in writing.)** Your request must specify the alternative means or location, and provide satisfactory explanation how payments will be handled under the alternative means or location you request.

**Amendment:** You have the right to request that we amend your health information. (Your request must be in writing, and it must explain why the information should be amended.) We may deny your request under certain circumstances.

**Right to Notification of a Breach:** You will receive notifications of breaches of your unsecured protected health information as required by law.

**Electronic Notice:** If you receive this Notice on our Web site or by electronic mail (e-mail), you are entitled to receive this Notice in written form.

## QUESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

If you want more information about our privacy practices or have questions or concerns, please contact us.

You have the right to file a formal, written complaint with us at the address on this notice. You have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services in the event you feel your privacy rights have been violated. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

Privacy Officer: Kristy Crabtree ● 23056 Westheimer Pkwy, Katy, TX 77494 ● (281)347-1960