

Risk Management Division

Notice of Privacy Practices Effective April 14, 2003

Many people are worried today about how their personal health information is being used – and with very good reason. Information about your health is a very personal thing and its improper use can leave one feeling violated and victimized. The Risk Management Division (RMD), as the sponsor of your self-insured health plan, is equally concerned. This notice details how your medical information may be used and disclosed as well as how you can gain access to this information.

RMD is required by federal law to maintain and protect the privacy of your health information and provide you with notice of its legal duties and privacy practices. If you have any questions regarding this notice or the privacy of your health information, please contact RMD at PO Drawer 26110, Santa Fe, NM 87502-0110, or by telephone at 1-877-301-8041.

When Your Health Information Can Be Used or Disclosed by RMD

RMD has always been aware of the sensitivity of protected (or personal) health information (PHI). As such, RMD has limited the amount of PHI it receives in its facilities. In addition, RMD has ensured that each of its business associates (i.e. health plans) has committed to the same stringent privacy guidelines in dealing with your PHI.

The following categories describe the ways that RMD may use and disclose your PHI.

1. Payment Functions – RMD may use or disclose your PHI to facilitate payment for the treatment and services you receive. For example, if you send PHI to RMD as part of an appeal of a health plan decision, RMD may share that PHI with the health plan in order to facilitate the payment of the charges should they be determined to be covered under your plan.
2. Health Care Operations – RMD may use or disclose your PHI in order to conduct insurance-related activities. These activities include, but are not limited to, premium ratings, quality assurance processes (audits), fraud and abuse detection and investigation.
3. Legal Requirements / Law Enforcement – RMD may use or disclose your PHI, as required by law, in compliance with a court order or subpoena.
4. Public Health / Public Safety – RMD may use your PHI to prevent or lessen a serious and immediate threat to the health or safety of any person or the general public.

5. Health Oversight Activities – Your PHI may be disclosed to health oversight agencies, such as the New Mexico Department of Insurance (DOI), during the course of audits, investigations, inspections or other proceedings related to the oversight of the health care system.
6. Coroners, Medical Examiners and Funeral Directors – RMD may disclose your PHI to coroners, medical examiners and funeral directors.
7. Organ and Tissue Donation – RMD may disclose your PHI to organizations involved in procuring, banking or transplanting organs and tissues, as necessary.
8. National Security – RMD may disclose your PHI for military, national security, prisoner, and government benefits purposes.
9. Worker’s Compensation – RMD may disclose your PHI, as necessary, to comply with worker’s compensation or similar laws.
10. Marketing – RMD may use your PHI in order to contact you about health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

When Your Health Information Cannot Be Used or Disclosed by RMD

RMD may not use or disclose your health information without your written authorization, except as designated above in this notice. If you authorize the use PHI by RMD for another purpose, you may revoke your authorization in writing at any time. This revocation, however, cannot undo any disclosures that were already made with your permission.

Your Rights Regarding Your Health Information

1. Right to Request Restrictions – You have the right to request restrictions on the way your PHI is used and disclosed in certain situations. RMD is not required to agree to the restrictions but will apply them where prudent and reasonable. If you would like to make a request for restrictions, you must do so in writing to RMD at PO Drawer 26110, Santa Fe, NM 87502-0110.
2. Right to Request Confidential Communications – You have the right to receive your PHI through a reasonable alternative means or at an alternative location for confidentiality purposes. Be sure to include your “alternative location” request in writing to RMD at PO Drawer 26110, Santa Fe, NM 87502-0110. We are not required to agree to all such requests.

3. Right to Inspect and Copy – You have the right to inspect and copy your PHI that may be used to make decisions about your plan benefits. To inspect and copy such information, you must submit your request in writing to RMD at PO Drawer 26110, Santa Fe, NM 87502-0110. We may charge you a reasonable fee to cover expenses associated with your request.
4. Right to Request Amendment – You have the right to request that RMD amend your PHI that you believe is incorrect or incomplete. Upon review, should RMD deny your requested amendment, you will be provided with information about the denial and how it may be appealed. To request an amendment, please do so in writing to RMD at PO Drawer 26110, Santa Fe, NM 87502-0110.
5. Right to Know to Whom Your PHI Has Been Disclosed – You have a right to receive a list or “accounting of disclosures” of your PHI, with the exception of disclosures made for payment functions or health care operations. To request this accounting, please submit your request in writing to RMD at PO Drawer 26110, Santa Fe, NM 87502-0110.
6. Right to Review This Notice – You have a right to receive a paper copy of this Privacy Notice at any time. To obtain a paper copy of this Notice, send your written request to RMD at PO Drawer 26110, Santa Fe, NM 87502-0110.

Should you wish to discuss these rights in more detail, or if you would like to exercise one or more of these rights, contact RMD at PO Drawer 26110, Santa Fe, NM 87502-0110 or by telephone at 1-888-301-8041.

Changes to this Notice

RMD reserves the right to amend this Notice of Privacy Practices in the future and to make the new Notice effective for all health information that it maintains. RMD will promptly distribute the new Notice to you whenever a material change is made. Until such time, RMD is required by law to comply with the current version of this Notice.

Complaints

Please direct any complaints about this Notice or about how your PHI is handled, in writing, to RMD at PO Drawer 26110, Santa Fe, NM 87502-0110. RMD assures you that you will not be retaliated against in any way for filing a complaint. If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.