

This information is for your information only:

Notice of Privacy Practices

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 requires that all medical records and other individually identifiable health information used or disclosed in any form, whether electronically, on paper, or orally, are kept confidential. The following are the privacy practices of Amy Warren, Licensed Mental Health Counselor.

The information disclosed in your therapy sessions is Protected Health Information (PHI) which is private and confidential with a few exceptions:

- ◆ If an indication is given of the threat of harm to your self or someone else, measures will be taken to protect you or the other person. These measures may include contacting family, close friends, crisis stabilization facilities, or the police.
- ◆ If there is suspicion of abuse of a child, elder, or disabled person, this information is required by law to be reported to authorities.
- ◆ If services are authorized through a managed care or insurance company, that company may require PHI to be released in order to provide payment and authorize services. In most cases, the information disclosed is limited. In some cases, the behavioral health care company requires the release of client progress notes. These companies are also required by law to protect your health information. If you have any questions or concerns about your third-party payer's requirements, please speak with me. You also have the option of paying for services out-of-pocket in order to avoid these disclosures.
- ◆ If a referral was made by a case manager or other health care provider who oversees treatment, then the disclosure of PHI may be required in order to receive payment or continue treatment. Please inquire if you have any question about the relevance of this disclosure to you.
- ◆ Information may be disclosed to other healthcare providers involved in your case in order to optimize treatment.
- ◆ A judge in a court of law may order you medical records to be released.
- ◆ In the case of group therapy, all group members must agree to confidentiality between members. However, this provider is unable to guarantee that another person will abide by their pledge.
- ◆ When being treating as a couple, e-mail correspondence with be shared with both parties unless otherwise arranged. It is requested that all email correspondence to therapist also be forwarded to partners. Responses by therapist to one partner will typically be copied to the other partner.
- ◆ When bill collection becomes necessary, information needed to collect payment may be disclosed.

The following measures are taken in order to protect your PHI.

- ◆ Medical records are stored in a secure place.
- ◆ A consent to release PHI is required in order to release information about you to someone other than the above-mentioned exceptions.

- ◆ When a request to release information is received from another source, these requests will not be honored if the authorization forms do not include information deemed necessary by this provider. In these instances, you will usually be contacted for consent and required to sign a form approved by this office. An additional fee is required in order to release records.
- ◆ In most cases, it is recommended that a case summary be provided in lieu of the release of all medical records. This recommendation is made in order to protect information from being released that is not necessary or could become psychologically harmful in the hands of someone else. The fee for a case summary is the provider's usual and customary fee (currently \$120).
- ◆ Faxes are sent with a statement of confidentiality.
- ◆ Electronic communications are only made through secure sites. In the case of e-mails, note that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed due to the inability to guarantee information conveyed through the Internet.
- ◆ Published articles written by this provider may contain information relating to case histories; however, the anonymity of clients is maintained.
- ◆ In speaking engagements, case histories are sometimes referenced but the anonymity of the individuals is maintained.
- ◆ In supervision or coaching, cases are discussed without identifying clients.
- ◆ Information divulged in an individual session may not be disclosed in a couple's therapy session without the individual's verbal consent. Impressions may be given by the therapist without disclosing session content.

You have the following rights regarding PHI about you:

- ◆ You have the right to request restrictions on uses and disclosures of PHI about you.
- ◆ You have the right to request in writing that a prior authorization to release information to another person be revoked or discontinued.
- ◆ You have the right to request different ways to communicate with you.
- ◆ You have the right to inspect and copy your PHI.
- ◆ You have the right to request an amendment of PHI about you.
- ◆ You have the right to receive an accounting of disclosures of protected health information.
- ◆ You have the right to a copy of this Notice upon request.

This effective date of this notice is October 15, 2006. You have recourse if you feel your privacy protections have been violated. You have the right to file a written complaint without retaliation by this office. For more information about HIPAA or to file a complaint, contact The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Civil Rights, 200 Independent Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20201.