

Nature's Path of Integrated Health, Inc.

Privacy and Security Policy

(HIPPA form)

It is the policy of Nature's Path of Integrated Health (NPIH) to preserve the integrity and confidentiality of medical and other sensitive information pertaining to clients. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that NPIH employees have the necessary medical and other information to provide the highest quality of mental health care possible while protecting the confidentiality of that information. Clients should be able to provide information to NPIH with the purposes of treatment without fear of unauthorized disclosure. To that end, NPIH will:

1. Collect and use individual medical information only for the purposes of providing mental health services and for supporting the delivery, payment, integrity, and quality of those services. NPIH will not use or supply individual medical information for non-health care uses, such as direct marketing, employment, or credit evaluation purposes.
2. Collect and use individual medical information only:
 - a. To provide proper diagnosis and treatment.
 - b. With the individual's knowledge and consent.
 - c. To receive reimbursement for services provided.
 - d. As a basis for required reporting of health information.
3. Recognize that medical information collected about clients must be accurate, timely, complete, and available when needed. NPIH will:
 - a. Use their best efforts to ensure the accuracy, timeliness, and completeness of data and to ensure that authorized personnel can access it when needed.
 - b. Complete and authenticate medical records in accordance with the law, professional ethics, and accreditation standards.
 - c. Maintain medical records for the retention periods required by law and professional standards.
 - d. Not alter or destroy an entry in a record, but rather designate it as an error while leaving the original entry intact and create and maintain a new entry showing the correct data.
 - e. Implement reasonable measures to protect the integrity of all data maintained about patients.
4. Recognize that clients have a right of privacy. NPIH will respect the client's privacy consistent with providing the highest quality mental health Care possible and with the efficient administration of the facility.
5. Act as responsible information gatherers and treat **all** individual medical record data with and related financial, demographic, and lifestyle information as sensitive and confidential. Consequently, NPIH will:

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- a. Treat all individual medical record data as confidential in accordance with professional ethics, accreditations standards, and legal requirements.
- b. Not divulge medical record data unless the patient (or his or her authorized representative) has properly consented to the release or the release is otherwise authorized by law, such as communicable disease reporting, child or elder abuse reporting, and the like.
- c. When releasing medical record data, take appropriate steps to prevent unauthorized re-disclosures, such as specifying that the recipient may not further disclose the information without patient consent or as authorized by law.

- d. Implement reasonable measures to protect the confidentiality of medical and other information maintained about clients.
 - e. Remove patient identifiers when appropriate, such as in statistical reporting and in medical research studies.
 - f. Not disclose financial or other patient information except as necessary for billing or other purposes as authorized by law and professional standards.
6. Recognize that some medical information is particularly sensitive, such as mental health and developmental disability information, alcohol and drug abuse information, HIV/AIDS and other information about sexually transmitted or communicable diseases; and that disclosure of such information could severely harm clients, such as by causing loss of employment opportunities, and insurance coverage, as well as the pain of social stigma. Consequently, NPIH will treat such information with additional confidentiality protections as required by law, professional ethics, and accreditation requirements.
7. Recognize that, although NPIH owns the medical record, the client has a right of access to information contained in the record. NPIH will:
 - a. Permit client access to their medical records except when access would be detrimental to the client under the therapeutic exception to patient access. In such cases, NPIH will provide an authorized representative access to the client's records in accordance with law, professional ethics, and accreditation requirements.
 - b. Provide patients with the opportunity to request correction of inaccurate data in their records in accordance with the law and professional standards.

NPIH must adhere to this policy. Any client who believes that their right to privacy has been violated should contact NPIH.

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Acknowledgement of NPIH Privacy and Security Policy

I have received a copy of the NPIH Privacy and Security Policy and understand my rights as they are discussed in that document. I agree to allow NPIH to phone me at home, on my mobile phone, or at my place of employment to confirm/change appointments, gather information, or to inform me of a problem. I also agree to allow NPIH to leave messages pertaining to my involvement with the agency on my home/work/cell voicemail or answering machine.

I understand that NPIH will notify me and that I will be asked to sign a separate permission form if any medical or behavioral information is to be released to another organization or person not employed by NPIH. I understand that I have the right to refuse to allow this information to be released except where NPIH is required to do so by law or contractual obligation.

_____ Date: _____
Client Name

Signed:

X _____ Date: _____
Client/Legal Guardian

_____ Date: _____
Witness