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# Highmark Wisdom Teeth & Oral Surgery, SC

## 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 is effective January 1, 2026, and will remain in effect until we replace it.

In addition, we will inform you of any unauthorized access, use or disclosure of your unencrypted confidential information in the event its security or privacy is compromised (i.e., in the event that a reportable breach occurs as provided by the HIPAA Omnibus Final Rule.) We will provide such notice to you without unreasonable delay but in no case later than sixty days after we discover the breach

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. Before we make a significant change in our privacy practices, we will change this Notice and make the new Notice available upon request.

You may request a paper copy of our Notice at any time. In addition we will post the current Notice on our website. 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 use and disclose health information about you for treatment, payment, and healthcare operations. For example:

**Treatment:** We may use or disclose your health information to a physician or other healthcare provider providing treatment to you. This includes the leaving of a voice message on your behalf by a member of our staff to check on your progress following surgical treatment unless you object to this practice in writing.

**Payment:** We may use and disclose your health information to obtain payment for services we provide to you. For example we may use PHI to submit a claim to your insurance company or to seek preauthorization from your insurance company to perform a procedure.

**Healthcare Operations:** We may use and disclose your health information in connection with our healthcare operations. Healthcare operations include quality assessment and improvement activities, reviewing the competence or qualifications of healthcare professionals, evaluating practitioner and provider performance, conducting training programs, accreditation, certification, licensing or credentialing activities.

**Access To Records:** Our entire clinical staff is allowed full access to patient information in order to ensure the proper provision of treatment. For instance, our front desk staff members require access as necessary to obtain payment.

**Your Authorization:** In addition to our use of your health information for treatment, payment or healthcare operations, you may give us written authorization to use your health information or to disclose it to anyone for any purpose. 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. Unless you give us a written authorization, we cannot use or disclose your health information for any reason except those described in this Notice.

**To Your Family and Friends:** We must disclose your health information to you, as described in the Patient Rights section of this Notice. We may disclose your health information to a family member, friend or other person to the extent necessary to help with your healthcare or with payment for your healthcare, but only if you agree that we may do so or we determine in our discretion that it is in your best interest to disclose that information.

**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. If you are present, then prior to use or disclosure of your health information, we will provide you with an opportunity to object to such uses or disclosures. 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 filled prescriptions, medical supplies, x-rays, or other similar forms of health information.

**Marketing Health-Related Services:** We will not use your health information for marketing communications without your written authorization.

**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 child abuse or neglect, or dependent adult abuse 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 institution or law enforcement official having lawful custody of protected health information of inmate or patient under certain circumstances.

**Appointment Reminders:** We may use or disclose your health information to provide you with appointment reminders (such as voicemail messages or letters). A voicemail message may be left for you in order to ensure you are adequately prepared for your appointment. This message could detail information such as instructions regarding the anesthetic technique and/or an estimate of the payment expected of you on the date of service. You have the right to object to this practice. **{You must make your request in writing.}**

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## **PATIENT RIGHTS**

**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 paper or electronic format. We will use the format you request unless we cannot practicably 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 a reasonable cost-based fee that may include labor, copying costs, and postage. 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. Contact us using the information listed at the end of this Notice for a full explanation of our fee structure.) In addition you may come to the office to inspect your protected health information but only if we mutually agree to a time.

**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, from your paper record for the last 6 years. An accounting for disclosures from your electronic medical record will contain disclosures for treatment, payment and health care operations, but will only be for the past three 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 that we place additional restrictions on our use or disclosure of your health information. We are not required to agree to these additional restrictions unless the restriction is for disclosure to any entity that pays for your health care, such as your health plan, insurer, Medicare or Medicaid. For all other disclosures, we will abide by our agreement (except in an emergency). In addition we will not comply with any restrictions with respect to disclosures that are required by law.

**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.

**Electronic Notice:** If you receive this Notice on our Web site or by electronic mail (e-mail), you are entitled to also receive a paper notice.

**Other Uses of Medical Information.** Other uses and disclosures of medical information not covered by this Notice or the laws that apply to us will be made only with your written permission as set out in an authorization signed by you.

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## **QUESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS**

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

If you are concerned that we may have violated your privacy rights, or you disagree with a decision we made about access to your health information or in response to a request you made to amend or restrict the use or disclosure of your health information or to have us communicate with you by alternative means or at alternative locations, you may complain to us using the contact information listed at the end of this Notice. You also may submit a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We will provide you with the address to file your complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services upon request.

We support your right to the privacy of your health information. We will not retaliate in any way if you choose to file a complaint with us or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Contact Officer: **Dr. Potaczek**  
Telephone: 715-471-2168 Fax: 715-471-2170  
Address: 822 S. Hastings Way, Eau Claire, WI 54701