

Charlotte Gastroenterology and Hepatology

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 16, 2026

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

WHO WILL FOLLOW THIS NOTICE

This notice describes the practices of:

- Charlotte Gastroenterology and Hepatology (collectively “the Practice or “we”).
- Any health care professional authorized to enter information into your medical record maintained by the Practice.
- Any persons or companies with whom the practice contracts for services to help operate our Practice and who have access to your protected health information.
- All these persons, entities, sites, and locations follow the terms of this notice. In addition, these persons, entities, sites, and locations may share medical information with each other for treatment, payment, or health care operations purposes and other purposes described in this notice.

We are required by law to give you this notice to you pursuant to HIPAA. The HIPAA Privacy Rule protects only certain medical information known as “protected health information.” Generally, protected health information is individually identifiable health information, including demographic information, collected from you or created or received by a health care provider, a health care clearinghouse, a health plan, or your employer on behalf of a health which relates to:

1. your past, present or future physical or mental health or condition;
2. the provision of health care to you; or
3. the past, present or future payment for the provision of health care to you.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION

We understand that medical information about you and your health is personal. We are committed to protecting medical information about you. We create a record of the care and services you receive from the Practice. We need this record to provide you with quality care and to comply with certain legal

requirements. This notice applies to all the records of your care and billing for that care that are generated or maintained by the Practice, whether made by the Practice personnel or other health care providers. Other health care providers may have different policies or notices about confidentiality and disclosure that apply to your medical information that is created in their offices or at locations other than the Practice.

This notice will tell you about the ways in which we may use and disclose medical information about you. We also describe your rights and certain obligations we have regarding the use and disclosure of your medical information.

- Make sure that medical information that identifies you is kept private;
- Give you this notice of our legal duties and privacy practices at Charlotte Gastroenterology and Hepatology, and your legal rights, with respect to protected health information about you, including certain substance use disorder (SUD) records covered by 42 CFR (Part 2); and
- Follow the terms of the notice that is currently in effect.

We reserve the right to change this notice. We reserve the right to make the revised or changed notice effective for medical information we already have about you as well as any information we receive in the future. We will post a copy of the current notice at the Practice's office. The notice will contain the effective date on the first page. If the notice changes, a copy will be available to you upon request.

If you have any questions about this notice or our privacy practices, please contact the Charlotte Gastroenterology and Hepatology Privacy Officer:

Contact Information:

Charlotte Gastroenterology and Hepatology
Attention: HIPAA Privacy Officer
13808 Professional Center Drive
Huntersville, NC 28078
(704) 377-4009

A current copy of this notice is available at www.CharlotteGastro.com

HOW WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

Under the law, we may use or disclose your protected health information under certain circumstances without your permission. The following categories describe the different ways that we may use and disclose your protected health information. For each category of uses or disclosures we will explain what we mean and present some examples. Not every use or disclosure in a category will be listed. However, all of the ways we are permitted to use and disclose protected health information will fall within one of these categories.

- **For Treatment.** We may use medical information about you to provide you with medical treatment or services. We may disclose medical information about you to doctors, nurses, technicians, medical students, volunteers, or other personnel who are involved in taking care of you at the Practice. For example, a doctor treating you for a broken hip may need to know if you have diabetes because diabetes may slow the healing process. We also may disclose medical information about you to people outside the practice who may be involved in your medical care after you have been treated by the practice, such as friends, family members, or employees or medical staff members of any hospital or skilled nursing facility to which you are transferred or subsequently admitted.
- **For Payment.** We may use and disclose medical information about you so that the treatment and services you receive from the practice may be billed by the practice and payment may be collected from you, an insurance company, or a third party. For example, we may need to give your health plan information about treatment you received from the Practice so your health plan will pay us or reimburse you for the treatment. We also may disclose information about you to another health care provider, such as a hospital or skilled nursing facility to which you are admitted, for their payment activities concerning you.
- **For Health Care Operations.** We and our business associates may use and disclose medical information about you for health care operations. These uses and disclosures are necessary to run the Practice and make sure that all of our patients receive quality care. For example, we may use medical information to review our treatment and services and to evaluate the performance of our staff in caring for you. We may also combine medical information about many patients to decide what additional services the Practice should offer, and what services are not needed. We may also disclose information to doctors, nurses, technicians, and other personnel affiliated with the Practice for review and learning purposes. We may also combine the medical information we have with medical information from other health care providers to compare how we are doing and see where we can make improvements in the care and services we offer. We may remove information that identifies you from this set of medical information so others may use it to study health care and health care delivery without learning the identities of specific patients. We also may disclose information about you to another health care provider for its health care operations purposes if you also have received care from that provider.
- **Treatment Alternatives.** We may use and disclose medical information to tell you about or recommend different ways to treat you.
- **Research.** Under certain circumstances, we may use and disclose medical information about you for research purposes. For example, a research project may involve comparing the health and recovery of all patients who received one medication to those who received another for the same condition. Medical information about you that has had identifying information removed may be used for research without your consent. We also may disclose medical information about you to people preparing to conduct a research project (for example, to help them look for patients with specific medical needs), so long as the medical information they review does not leave the Practice. If the

researcher has information about your mental health treatment that reveals who you are, we will seek your consent before disclosing that information to the researcher. Unless we notify you in advance and you give us written permission, we will not receive any money or other thing of value in connection for using or disclosing your medical information for research purposes except for money to cover the costs of preparing and sending the medical information to the researcher.

- **Individuals Involved in Your Care or Payment for Your Care.** We may release medical information about you to a friend or family member who is involved in your medical care. This would include persons named in any durable health care power of attorney or similar document provided to us. We may also give information to someone who helps pay for some or all of your care. In addition, we may disclose medical information about you to an entity assisting in a disaster relief effort so that your family can be notified about your condition, status, and location. You can object to these releases by telling us that you do not wish any or all individuals involved in your care to receive this information. If you are not present or cannot agree or object, we will use our professional judgment to decide whether it is in your best interest to release relevant information to someone who is involved in your care or to an entity assisting in a disaster relief effort.
- **As Required or Permitted By Law.** We may disclose medical information about you when required or permitted to do so by federal, state, or local law.
- **To Avert a Serious Threat to Health or Safety.** We may use and disclose medical information about you when it appears necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of the public or another person. Any disclosure would be to someone who appears able to help prevent the threat and will be limited to the information needed.
- **Fundraising Activities.** We may use medical information about you to contact you in an effort to raise money for the Practice and its operations. Specifically, we may use information about you to target our fundraising efforts. For example, if we are raising money for women's health services, we may focus our fundraising efforts on individuals who have received women's health services from us in the past. We may also disclose medical information to a business partner or a foundation related to the Practice so that the business partner or the foundation may contact you in raising money for the Practice. We would release limited information about you, such as your name, address and phone number, age and date of birth, gender, your physician, and the dates you received treatment or services at the Practice.

If you do not want the Practice to contact you for fundraising efforts, you must notify the Practice's Privacy Officer in writing. If you have not already done so, we must ask you each time we contact you for fundraising efforts if you wish to opt out of all future fundraising communications. If you do opt out of future fundraising communications, we will no longer disclose your information for fundraising purposes. However, in the future you may let us know in writing that you would like to receive these fundraising communications. Your decision whether or not to receive targeted fundraising materials from us will have no impact on your access to health care services or the treatment we provide to you.

Even if you have opted out, we may send you non-targeted fundraising materials that are sent out to the general community and are not based on information from your treatment.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

- **Organ and Tissue Donation.** If you are an organ donor, we may release medical information to organizations that handle organ procurement or organ, eye, or tissue transplantation, or to an organ donation bank as necessary to facilitate organ or tissue donation and transplantation.

- **Active Duty Military Personnel and Veterans.** If you are an active-duty member of the armed forces or Coast Guard, we must give certain information about you to your commanding officer or other command authority so that your fitness for duty or for a particular mission may be determined. We may also release medical information about foreign military personnel to the appropriate foreign military authority. We may use and disclose to components of the Department of Veterans Affairs medical information about you to determine whether you are eligible for certain benefits.
- **Workers' Compensation.** In accordance with state law, we may release without your consent medical information about your treatment for a work-related injury or illness or for which you claim workers' compensation to your employer, insurer, or care manager paying for that treatment under a workers' compensation program that provides benefits for work-related injuries or illness.
- **Public Health Risks.** We may disclose without your consent medical information about you for public health activities. These activities are generally included but are not limited to the following:
 - To report, prevent or control disease, injury, or disability;
 - To report births and deaths;
 - To report reactions to medications or problems with products;
 - To notify people of recalls of products they may be using;
 - To notify a person who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk for contracting or spreading a disease or condition; and
 - To report suspected abuse or neglect as required by law.
- **Health Oversight Activities.** We may disclose medical information without your consent to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. These oversight activities include, for example, audits, investigations, inspections, and licensure. The government uses these activities to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws.
- **Lawsuits and Disputes.** If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we must disclose medical information about you in response to a court or administrative order. We also may disclose medical information about you in response to a subpoena or other lawful process from someone involved in a civil dispute.
- **Law Enforcement.** We may release medical information without your consent to a law enforcement official:
 - In response to a court order, warrant, summons, grand jury demand, or similar process;
 - To comply with mandatory reporting requirements for violent injuries, such as gunshot wounds, stab wounds, and poisonings;
 - In response to a request from law enforcement for certain information to help locate a fugitive, material witness, suspect, or missing person;
 - To report a death or injury we believe may be the result of criminal conduct; and
 - To report suspected criminal conduct committed at the Practice facilities.

- **Coroners and Medical Examiners.** We may release without your consent medical information to a coroner or medical examiner. This may be done, for example, to identify a deceased person or determine the cause of death. We also may release medical information about deceased patients of the Practice to funeral directors to carry out their duties.
- **National Security and Intelligence Activities.** We may release without your consent medical information about you as required by applicable law to authorized federal or state officials for intelligence, counterintelligence, or other governmental activities prescribed by law to protect our national security.
- **Marketing of Health-Related Products and Services.** “Marketing” means a communication for which we receive any sort of payment from a third party that encourages you to use a service or buy a product. Before we may use or disclose your medical information to market a health-related product or service to you, we must obtain your written authorization to do so. The authorization form will let you know that we have been paid to make the communication to you. Marketing does not include prescription refill reminders or other information that describes a drug you currently are being prescribed, so long as any payment we receive for that communication is to cover the cost of making the communication; face-to-face communications; or gifts of nominal value, such as pens or key chains stamped with our name or the name of a health care product manufacturer. Communications made about your treatment, such as when your physician refers you to another health care provider, generally are not marketing.
- **Sale of Medical Information.** We cannot sell your medical information without first receiving your authorization in writing. Any authorization form you sign agreeing to the sale of your medical information must state that we will receive payment of some kind disclosing your information. However, because a “sale” has a specific definition under the law, it does not include all situations in which payment of some kind is received for the disclosure. For example, a disclosure for which we charge a fee to cover the cost to prepare and transmit the information does not qualify as a “sale” of your information.
- **Inmates.** If you are an inmate of a correctional institution or in the custody of law enforcement, we may release medical information about you to the correctional institution or law enforcement official who has custody of you, if the correctional institution or law enforcement official represents to the Practice that such medical information is necessary: (1) to provide you with health care; (2) to protect your health and safety or the health and safety of others; (3) to protect the safety and security of officers, employees, or others at the correctional institution or involved in transporting you; (4) for law enforcement to maintain safety and good order at the correctional institution; or (5) to obtain payment for services provided to you. If you are in the custody of the North Carolina Department of Corrections (“DOC”) and the DOC requests your medical records, we are required to provide the DOC with access to your records.
- **HIE.** The Practice may submit your health information to any health information exchanges (“HIE”) in which we participate. An HIE is a health information exchange database where member providers can access your medical information for routine or emergency care. These currently include, but are not limited to, NC HealthConnex (a statewide HIE). This means that other health care providers may have access to your health information through their participation with the HIE. If you do not want your health information to be sent to NC HealthConnex, you can opt out by visiting their website, <https://hiea.nc.gov>. It may take several days for an HIE opt-out to go into effect.
- **North Carolina Law** In the event that North Carolina Law requires us to give more protection to your health information than stated in this notice or required by Federal Law, we will give that additional protection to your health information.

YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

You have the following rights regarding medical information we maintain about you:

- **Right to Inspect and Copy.** You have the right to inspect and obtain a copy of the protected health information we maintain about you that is used to make decisions about your care. To inspect or obtain a copy of your health information, submit a written request to the Practice's Privacy Officer. We may charge a reasonable, cost-based fee for copying, mailing, or providing records in the format you request, as permitted by law.

In limited circumstances, we may deny your request. If we do, we will provide you with a written explanation and, when applicable, information about your right to have the denial reviewed.

- **Right to Amend.** If you feel that medical information we have about you in your record is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information. You have the right to request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by or for the Practice

To request an amendment, make your request in writing to the Practice's Privacy Officer. In addition, you must provide a reason that supports your request. We may deny your request for an amendment if it is not in writing or does not include a reason to support the request. In addition, we may deny your request if you ask us to amend information that:

- Was not created by us, unless the person or entity that created the information is no longer available to make the amendment;
- Is not part of the medical information kept by or for the Practice;
- Is not part of the information that you would be permitted to inspect and copy; or
- Has been determined to be accurate and complete.

If we deny your request for an amendment, you may submit a written statement of disagreement and ask that it be included in your medical record.

- **Right to an Accounting of Disclosures.** You have the right to request a list of certain disclosures we have made of medical information about you during the past six years. The accounting will not include 1. Disclosures for purposes of treatment, payment, or health care operations; 2. Disclosures made to you; 3. Disclosures made pursuant to your authorization; 4. Disclosures made to friends or family in your presence or because of an emergency; 5. Disclosures for national security purposes; and 6. Disclosures incidental to otherwise permissible disclosures.

To request this list or accounting of disclosures, submit your request in writing to the Practice's Privacy Officer and state whether you want the list on paper or electronically. Your request must state a time period that may not be longer than six years. The first list you request within a 12-month period will be free. For additional lists, we may charge you for the costs of providing the list. We will notify you of the cost involved and you may choose to withdraw or modify your request at that time before any costs are incurred. We may collect the fee before providing the list to you.

- **Right to Request Restrictions.** Except where we are required to disclose the information by law, you have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the medical information we use or disclose about you. For example, you could revoke any and all authorizations you previously gave us relating to disclosure of your medical information.

We are not required to agree to your request, with the exception of restrictions on disclosures to your health plan, as described below. If we do agree, we will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide you with emergency treatment.

To request restrictions, make your request in writing to the Practice's Privacy Officer. In your request, you must tell us (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, for example, disclosures to your spouse.

You may request that we not disclose your medical information to your health insurance plan for some or all the services you receive during a visit to any of the Practice's location. If you pay for those services in full out-of-pocket at the time the services are provided and request that we do not disclose the information to your health plan, we are required to agree to that request. "In full" means the amount we charge for the service, not your copay, coinsurance, or deductible responsibility when your insurer pays for your care. Please note that once information about a service has been submitted to your health plan, we cannot agree to your request. If you think you may wish to restrict the disclosure of your medical information for a certain service, please let us know as early in your visit as possible.

- **Right to Request Confidential Communications.** You have the right to request that we communicate with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location. For example, you can ask that we only contact you at work or by mail, or at another mailing address other than your home address. We will accommodate all reasonable requests. We will not ask you for the reason for your request. To request confidential communications, make your request in writing to the Privacy Officer and specify how or where you wish to be contacted.
- **Right to a Paper Copy of This Notice.** You have the right to a paper copy of this notice or any revised notice. You may ask us to give you a copy of this notice at any time. Even if you have agreed to receive this notice electronically, you are still entitled to a paper copy of this notice.

To obtain a paper copy of this notice, request a copy from the Practice's Privacy Officer in writing.

INVESTIGATIONS OF BREACHES OF PRIVACY

We will investigate any discovered unauthorized use or disclosure of your medical information to determine if it constitutes a breach of federal privacy or security regulations addressing such information. If we determine that such a breach has occurred, we will provide you with notice of the breach and advise you what we intend to do to mitigate the damage (if any) caused by the breach, and about the steps you should take to protect yourself from potential harm resulting from the breach.

COMPLAINTS

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with Charlotte Gastroenterology and Hepatology or with the Office of Civil Rights of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. You can file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights by sending a letter to 200 Independence Ave, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202, calling 1-877-696-6775 or visiting <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/filing-a-complaint/complaint->

[process/index.html](#)

To file a complaint with the Practice, contact Charlotte Gastroenterology and Hepatology's Privacy Officer by mail at 13808 Professional Center Drive, Huntersville, NC 28078. All complaints must be submitted in writing.

You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.

OTHER USES OF MEDICAL INFORMATION

Other uses and disclosures of medical information not covered by this notice may be made only with your written authorization or as required by law. If you authorize us to use or disclose medical information about you, you may revoke that authorization, in writing, at any time. Your revocation will be effective as of the end of the day on which you provide it in writing to the Practice's Privacy Officer. If you revoke your permission, we will no longer use or disclose medical information about you for the purposes that you previously had authorized in writing. You understand that we are unable to take back any disclosures we have already made with your permission, and that we are required to retain our records of the care that we provided to you.