

Day Hill Psychotherapy
Jenny Gialopsos, LCSW, Tracy Bodine, LCSW, Jenabeth Rush, LPC, Tom Reif, PhD

Notice Policies and Practices to Protect the Privacy of Your Health Information

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

I. Uses and Disclosures for Treatment, Payment, and Health Care Operations

The mental health providers at Day Hill Psychotherapy (DHP) may *use* or *disclose* your *protected health information (PHI)*, for *treatment, payment, and health care operations* purposes with your *consent*. To help clarify these terms, here are some definitions:

- “*PHI*” refers to information in your health record that could identify you.
- “*Treatment, Payment and Health Care Operations*”
 - *Treatment* is when DHP provides, coordinate or manage your health care and other services related to your health care. An example of treatment would be when DHP consults with another health care provider, such as your family physician or another psychologist.
 - *Payment* is when DHP obtains reimbursement for your healthcare. Examples of payment are when DHP discloses your PHI to your health insurer to obtain reimbursement for your health care or to determine eligibility or coverage.
 - *Health Care Operations* are activities that relate to the performance and operation of DHP practice. Examples of health care operations are quality assessment and improvement activities, business-related matters such as audits and administrative services, and case management and care coordination.
- “*Use*” applies only to activities within DHP, such as sharing, employing, applying, utilizing, examining, and analyzing information that identifies you.
- “*Disclosure*” applies to activities outside of DHP, such as releasing, transferring, or providing access to information about you to other parties.

II. Uses and Disclosures Requiring Authorization

DHP may use or disclose PHI for purposes outside of treatment, payment, or health care operations when your appropriate authorization is obtained. An “*authorization*” is written permission above and beyond the general consent that permits only specific disclosures. In those instances when DHP is asked for information for purposes outside of treatment, payment or health care operations, DHP will obtain an authorization from you before releasing this information. DHP will also need to obtain an authorization before releasing your Psychotherapy Notes. “*Psychotherapy Notes*” are notes DHP has made about our conversation during a private, group, joint, or family counseling session, which DHP has kept separate from the rest of your medical record. These notes are given a greater degree of protection than PHI.

You may revoke all such authorizations (of PHI or Psychotherapy Notes) at any time, provided each revocation is in writing. You may not revoke an authorization to the extent that (1) DHP has relied on that authorization; or (2) if the authorization was obtained as a condition of obtaining insurance coverage, law provides the insurer the right to contest the claim under the policy.

III. Uses and Disclosures with Neither Consent nor Authorization

DHP may use or disclose PHI without your consent or authorization in the following circumstances:

- *Child Abuse* – If DHP, in the ordinary course of its work, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that any child under the age of eighteen years (1) has been abused or neglected, (2) has had non-accidental physical injury, or injury which is at variance with the history given of such injury, inflicted upon such child, or (3) is placed at imminent risk of serious harm, then DHP must report this suspicion or belief to the appropriate authority.
- *Adult and Domestic Abuse* – If DHP knows or in good faith suspect that an elderly individual or an individual, who is disabled or incompetent, has been abused, DHP may disclose the appropriate information as permitted law.
- *Health Oversight Activities* – If the Connecticut Board of Examiners of Psychologists is investigating DHP, the board may subpoena records relevant to such investigation.
- *Judicial and Administrative Proceedings* – If you are involved in a court proceeding and a request is made for information about your diagnosis and treatment and the records thereof, such information is privileged under state law, and DHP will not release information without the written authorization of you or your legally appointed representative or a court order. The privilege does not apply when you are being evaluated for a third party or where the evaluation is court ordered. You will be informed in advance if this is the case.
- *Serious Threat to Health or Safety* – If DHP believes in good faith that there is risk of imminent personal injury to you or to other individuals or risk of imminent injury to the property of other individuals, DHP may disclose the appropriate information as permitted law.
- *Worker’s Compensation* – DHP may disclose protected health information regarding you as authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with laws relating to worker’s compensation or other similar programs, established by law, that provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness without regard to fault.

IV. Patient's Rights and Psychologist's Duties

Patient's Rights:

- *Right to Request Restrictions* – You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of protected health information. However, DHP is not required to agree to a restriction you request.
- *Right to Receive Confidential Communications by Alternative Means and at Alternative Locations* – You have the right to request and receive confidential communications of PHI by alternative means and at alternative locations. (For example, you may not want a family member to know that you are seeing DHP. On your request, DHP will send your bills to another address.)
- *Right to Inspect and Copy* – You have the right to inspect or obtain a copy (or both) of PHI in our mental health and billing records used to make decisions about you for as long as the PHI is maintained in the record. DHP may deny your access to PHI under certain circumstances, but in some cases you may have this decision reviewed. On your request, DHP will discuss with you the details of the request and denial process.
- *Right to Amend* – You have the right to request an amendment of PHI for as long as the PHI is maintained in the record. DHP may deny your request. On your request, DHP will discuss with you the details of the amendment process.
- *Right to an Accounting* – You generally have the right to receive an accounting of disclosures of PHI. On your request, DHP will discuss with you the details of the accounting process.
- *Right to a Paper Copy* – You have the right to obtain a paper copy of the notice from DHP upon request, even if you have agreed to receive the notice electronically.

Psychologist's Duties:

- DHP is required by law to maintain the privacy of PHI and to provide you with a notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to PHI.
- DHP reserves the right to change the privacy policies and practices described in this notice. Unless DHP notifies you of such changes, however, DHP is required to abide by the terms currently in effect.
- If DHP revises its policies and procedures, DHP will notify you immediately by email or regular mail.

V. Questions and Complaints

If you have questions about this notice, disagree with a decision DHP makes about access to your records, or have other concerns about your privacy rights, you may contact Tracy Bodine, LCSW, Privacy Officer, at (860) 925-6052.

If you believe that your privacy rights have been violated and wish to file a complaint with DHP, you may send your written complaint to Tracy Bodine, LCSW, Privacy Officer, 110 Day Hill Rd., Windsor, CT 06095, or at (860) 925-6052.

You may also send a written complaint to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The person listed above can provide you with the appropriate address upon request.

You have specific rights under the Privacy Rule. DHP will not retaliate against you for exercising your right to file a complaint.

VI. Effective Date, Restrictions, and Changes to Privacy Policy

This notice went into effect on April 14, 2003.

I have read this notice and agree to its contents:

Signature _____

Name (printed) _____

Date _____ Witness _____