



Avalon Hospice  
& Palliative Care

This **PRIVACY 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.**

### **Use and disclosure of health information**

**Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care** may use your health information, information that constitutes protected health information as defined in the Privacy Rule of the Administrative Simplification provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, for purposes of providing you treatment, obtaining payment for your care and conducting health care operations. Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care has established policies to guard against unnecessary disclosure of your health information.

**The following is a summary of the circumstances under which and purposes for which your health information may be used and disclosed:**

**To provide treatment.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may use your health information to coordinate care within Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care and with others involved in your care, such as your attending physician, members of Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care interdisciplinary team and other health care professionals who have agreed to assist Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care in coordinating care. For example, physicians involved in your care will need information about your symptoms in order to prescribe appropriate medications. Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care also may disclose your health care information to individuals outside of Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care involved in your care including family members, clergy who you have designated, pharmacists, suppliers of medical equipment or other health care professionals.

**To obtain payment.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may include your health information in invoices to collect payment from third parties for the care you receive from Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care. For example, Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may be required by your health insurer to provide information regarding your health care status so that the insurer will reimburse you or Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care. Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care also may need to obtain prior approval from your insurer and may need to explain to the insurer your need for hospice care and the services that will be provided to you.

**To conduct health care operations.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may use and disclose health information for its own operations in order to facilitate the function of Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care and as necessary to provide quality care to all of Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care's patients. Health care operations includes such activities as:

- Quality assessment and improvement activities.
- Activities designed to improve health or reduce health care costs.
- Protocol development, case management and care coordination.
- Contacting health care providers and patients with information about treatment alternatives and other related functions that do not include treatment.
- Professional review and performance evaluation.
- Training programs including those in which students, trainees or practitioners in health care learn under supervision.
- Training of non-health care professionals.

- Accreditation, certification, licensing or credentialing activities.
- Review and auditing, including compliance reviews, medical reviews, legal services and compliance programs.
- Business planning and development including cost management and planning related analyses and formulary development.
- Business management and general administrative activities of Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care.
- Fundraising for the benefit of Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care.

For example Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may use your health information to evaluate its staff performance, combine your health information with other Hospice patients in evaluating how to more effectively serve all Hospice patients, disclose your health information to Hospice staff and contracted personnel for training purposes, use your health information to contact you as a reminder regarding a visit to you, or contact you as part of general fundraising and community information mailings (unless you tell us you do not want to be contacted).

**For Fundraising Activities.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may use information about you including your name, address, phone number and the dates you received care in order to contact you or your family to raise money for Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care. If you do not want Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care to contact you or your family, notify our privacy officer to indicate that you do not wish to be contacted. The privacy officer can be reached at (858) 751-0315.

**For Appointment Reminders.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may use and disclose your health information to contact you as a reminder that you have an appointment for a home visit.

**For Treatment Alternatives.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may use and disclose your health information to tell you about or recommend possible treatment options or alternatives that may be of interest to you.

**When Legally Required.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care will disclose your health information when it is required to do so by any Federal, State or local law.

**When There Are Risks to Public Health.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may disclose your health information for public activities and purposes in order to:

- Prevent or control disease, injury or disability, report disease, injury, vital events such as birth or death and the conduct of public health surveillance, investigations and interventions.
- Report adverse events, product defects, to track products or enable product recalls, repairs and replacements and to conduct post-marketing surveillance and compliance with requirements of the Food and Drug Administration.
- Notify a person who has been exposed to a communicable disease or who may be at risk of contracting or spreading a disease.
- Notify an employer about an individual who is a member of the workforce as legally required.

**To Report Abuse, Neglect Or Domestic Violence.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care is allowed to notify government authorities if Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care believes a patient is the victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence. Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care will make this disclosure only when specifically required or authorized by law or when the patient agrees to the disclosure.

**To Conduct Health Oversight Activities.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may disclose your health information to a health oversight hospice for activities including audits, civil administrative or criminal investigations, inspections, licensure or disciplinary action. Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care, however, may not disclose your health information if you are the subject of an investigation and your health information are not directly related to your receipt of health care or public benefits.

**In Connection With Judicial And Administrative Proceedings.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may disclose your health information in the course of any judicial or administrative proceeding in response to an order of a court or administrative tribunal as expressly authorized by such order or in response to a subpoena, discovery request or other lawful process, but only when Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care makes reasonable efforts to either notify you about the request or to obtain an order protecting your health information.

**For Law Enforcement Purposes.** As permitted or required by State law, Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may disclose your health information to a law enforcement official for certain law enforcement purposes as follows:

- As required by law for reporting of certain types of wounds or other physical injuries pursuant to the court order, warrant, subpoena or summons or similar process.
- For the purpose of identifying or locating a suspect, fugitive, material witness or missing person.
- Under certain limited circumstances, when you are the victim of a crime.
- To a law enforcement official if Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care has a suspicion that your death was the result of criminal conduct including criminal conduct at Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care.
- In an emergency in order to report a crime.

**To Coroners And Medical Examiners.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may disclose your health information to coroners and medical examiners for purposes of determining your cause of death or for other duties, as authorized by law.

**To Funeral Directors.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may disclose your health information to funeral directors consistent with applicable law and if necessary, to carry out their duties with respect to your funeral arrangements. If necessary to carry out their duties, Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may disclose your health information prior to and in reasonable anticipation of your death.

**For Research Purposes.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may, under very select circumstances, use your health information for research. Before Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care discloses any of your health information for such research purposes, the project will be subject to an extensive approval process.

**In the Event of A Serious Threat To Health Or Safety.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may, consistent with applicable law and ethical standards of conduct, disclose your health information if Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care, in good faith, believes that such disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to your health or safety or to the health and safety of the public.

**For Specified Government Functions.** In certain circumstances, the Federal regulations authorize Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care to use or disclose your health information to facilitate specified government functions relating to military and veterans, national security and intelligence activities, protective services for the President and others, medical suitability determinations and inmates and law enforcement custody.

**For Worker's Compensation.** Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may release your health information for worker's compensation or similar programs.

### **AUTHORIZATION TO USE OR DISCLOSE HEALTH INFORMATION**

Other than is stated above, Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care will not disclose your health information other than with your written authorization. If you or your representative authorizes Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care to use or disclose your health information, you may revoke that authorization in writing at any time.

## **YOUR RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION**

You have the following rights regarding your health information that Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care maintains:

**Right to request restrictions.** You may request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of your health information. You have the right to request a limit on Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care's disclosure of your health information to someone who is involved in your care or the payment of your care. However, Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care is not required to agree to your request. If you wish to make a request for restrictions, please contact our medical records supervisor at (858) 751-0315.

**Right to receive confidential communications.** You have the right to request that Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care communicate with you in a certain way. For example, you may ask that Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care only conduct communications pertaining to your health information with you privately with no other family members present. If you wish to receive confidential communications, please contact our privacy officer at (858) 751-0315. Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care will not request that you provide any reasons for your request and will attempt to honor your reasonable requests for confidential communications.

**Right to inspect and copy your health information.** You have the right to inspect and copy your health information, including billing records. A request to inspect and copy records containing your health information may be made to our medical records supervisor at (858) 751-0315. If you request a copy of your health information, Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may charge a reasonable fee for copying and assembling costs associated with your request.

**Right to amend health care information.** You or your representative has the right to request that Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care amend your records, if you believe that your health information is incorrect or incomplete. That request may be made as long as the information is maintained by Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care. A request for an amendment of records must be made in writing to our medical records supervisor at Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care, 3914 Murphy Canon Road, Suite A226, San Diego, Ca 92123. Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care may deny the request if it is not in writing or does not include a reason for the amendment. The request also may be denied if your health information records were not created by Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care, if the records you are requesting are not part of Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care's records, if the health information you wish to amend is not part of the health information you or your representative are permitted to inspect and copy, or if, in the opinion of Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care, the records containing your health information are accurate and complete.

**Right to an accounting.** You or your representative have the right to request an accounting of disclosures of your health information made by Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care for certain reasons, including reasons related to public purposes authorized by law and certain research. The request for an accounting must be made in writing to our medical records supervisor at Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care, 3914 Murphy Canon Road, Suite A226, San Diego, Ca 92123. The request should specify the time period for the accounting starting on or after April 14, 2003. Accounting requests may not be made for periods of time in excess of six (6) years. Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care would provide the first accounting you request during any 12-month period without charge. Subsequent accounting requests may be subject to a reasonable cost-based fee.

**Right to a paper copy of this notice.** You or your representative has a right to a separate paper copy of this Notice at any time even if you or your representative, have received this Notice previously. To obtain a separate paper copy, please contact our privacy officer at (858) 751-0315.

## **DUTIES OF AVALON HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE**

Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care is required by law to maintain the privacy of your health information and to provide to you and your representative this Notice of its duties and privacy practices. Avalon Hospice &

Palliative Care is required to abide by the terms of this Notice as may be amended from time to time. Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care reserves the right to change the terms of its Notice and to make the new Notice provisions effective for all health information that it maintains. If Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care changes its Notice, Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care will provide a copy of the revised Notice to you or your appointed representative. You or your personal representative has the right to express complaints to Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care and to the Secretary of DHHS if you or your representatives believe that your privacy rights have been violated. Any complaints to Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care should be made in writing to our privacy officer at Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care, 3914 Murphy Canon Road, Suite A226, San Diego, Ca 92123. Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care encourages you to express any concerns you may have regarding the privacy of your information. You will not be retaliated against in any way for filing a complaint.

### **CONTACT PERSON**

Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care has designated the Quality Improvement Manager as its contact person for all issues regarding patient privacy and your rights under the Federal privacy standards. You may contact this person at Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care, 3914 Murphy Canon Road, Suite A226, San Diego, Ca 92123, (858) 751-0315

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

This Notice is effective April 14, 2003.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS NOTICE, PLEASE CONTACT our Quality Improvement Manager at Avalon Hospice & Palliative Care, 3914 Murphy Canon Road, Suite A226, San Diego, Ca 92123, (858) 751-0315