

## Notice of Privacy Practices

Federal & State laws require Litchfield Smiles to maintain the privacy of all patient healthcare information. Furthermore, we are required by law to provide all parents or legal guardians with this notice reviewing our privacy practices, our legal obligations, and your rights in regard to your child's healthcare information. Litchfield Smiles must follow the privacy practices as described within this notice while this policy is in effect. This notice takes effect on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 and will remain in effect until replaced, amended, or eliminated.

Litchfield Smiles reserves the right to change these privacy practices and the terms of this notice at any time provided such applicable laws permit such changes. We reserve the right to make any needed changes to our privacy practices and these new terms will be effective for all health information that we maintain, including health information we create or receive before such made changes. Before we make any significant changes to our privacy practices, we will change this notice and make new notice available upon request.

Parent or legal guardians may request a copy of this notice, at any time. For additional information about our privacy practices or to review our company's Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA) Manual, please contact our office at any time.

### **USES & DISCLOSURES OF HEALTHCARE INFORMATION**

Litchfield Smiles will use and disclose patient healthcare information during your treatment, while obtaining payment from insurance companies and during general healthcare operations. For example:

**Treatment.** Litchfield Smiles may use your health information during direct treatment or by disclosing such information to other dentists, physicians or healthcare providers who may provide specialized treatment for you.

**Payment.** We may also use and disclose your health information to obtain payment for services rendered. We may disclose your healthcare information to another healthcare provider or entity that is also subject to these same federal & state privacy rules and regulations for payment activities.

**Healthcare Operations.** We may use and disclose your healthcare information during our routine healthcare operations. Healthcare operations may include quality assessments and improvement activities, reviewing the competence or qualifications of healthcare professionals, evaluation practitioner and provider performance, conducting training programs, accreditation, and certification, licensing, or credentialing activities. We may disclose your healthcare information to another healthcare provider or organization that is subject to the same federal & state privacy rules and regulations and that has a relationship with you during the support of healthcare operations. We may disclose your information to help such organizations conduct quality assessment and improvement activities, review the competence or qualifications of healthcare professionals, or detect or prevent healthcare fraud or abuse.

**On Your Authorization.** You may give Litchfield Smiles written authorization to use your healthcare information or to disclose it to anyone for any purpose. If you give us authorization, you may revoke it in writing at any time. Your revocation will not affect any issues or disclosures permitted by your authorization while it was in effect. Unless you give us a written authorization, we cannot use or disclose your healthcare information for any reason except those described within this notice.

**To Your Family & Friends.** 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 previously performed healthcare services. Before we disclose your health to these people, we will provide you with an opportunity to object to our use or disclosure. If you are not present, or in the event you are incapacitated and cannot make a decision for yourself, or in the event of an emergency, we will disclose your medical information based on our professional judgment of practices to make reasonable inferences of your best interest in allowing a person to pick up filled prescriptions, medical/dental supplies, radiographs or other similar forms including health information. We may also use or disclose information about you to notify or assist in notifying a person involved in his/her care.

**Appointment Reminders.** Litchfield Smiles may use or disclose your healthcare information to provide you and your family with appointment reminders. (Such as: telephone calls, voice messages, postcards, or letters)

**Disaster Relief.** We may use or disclose your healthcare information, as authorized by federal or state law for the following purposes deemed to be in the public's best interest or benefit:

- As required by law
- For public health activities, including disease and vital statistic reporting, reporting child abuse or neglect, FDA oversight and to employer's regarding work-related illness or injury.

- To health oversight agencies
- In response to court and administrative orders and lawful processes
- To law enforcement officials pursuant to subpoena and other lawful processes, concerning crime victims, suspicious deaths, crimes on our premises, reporting crimes in emergencies and for purposes of identifying or locating a suspect or other persons.
- To coroners, medical examiners and funeral directors
- To an organ procurement organization
- To avert serious threat to health or safety
- In connection with certain research activities
- To the military and to federal officials for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence and national security activities
- To correctional institutions regarding inmates
- As authorized by state worker's compensation laws

### **PATIENT or PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN RIGHTS**

**Access.** You have the right to look at or receive a copy of your health information, with limited expectations. You may request that we provide a copy in format other than photocopies. We will use the format you request unless we cannot practically do so. You must make all requests in writing to obtain access to your child's healthcare information. You may request access by sending us a letter. If you request a copy, we will charge you a reasonable fee, which 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 may, but are not required to, prepare a summary or an explanation of your health information for a fee.

**Disclosure Accounting.** You have the right to receive a list of instances in which Litchfield Smiles or any business associates disclosed your health information over the past year (but not prior to June 24th 2010). That list will not include disclosures for treatment, payment, healthcare operations, as authorized by you and certain activities. 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 the use or disclosure of your healthcare information. We are not required to agree with such additional restrictions, but if we do, we will abide by our agreement (except in the event of an emergency). Any agreement we make to a request for additional restrictions must be in writing and signed by our privacy officer. Your request is not binding unless our agreement is in writing.

**Alternative Communication.** You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your health information by an alternative means or at an alternative location. You must make your request in writing. You must specify in your request the alternative means or location and satisfactory explanation how you will handle payment under the alternative means or location you request.

**Amendment.** You have the right to request that we amend your healthcare information. Your request must be in writing and should explain why you are requesting this amendment. We may deny your request under certain circumstances.

### **QUESTIONS OR COMPLAINTS**

If you need additional information regarding our office's Privacy Practices & Regulations or have specific questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us. Furthermore, if you believe that:

- We may have violated your privacy rights
- We made a decision about access to your health information incorrectly
- Our response to a previous request to amend or restrict the use or disclosure of your information was incorrect
- We should communicate with you by alternative means or an alternative location

You may submit a written complaint with our privacy officer or directly to the US Department of Health & Human Services. We will provide you with these addresses to file your complaint, upon request. We support your right to the privacy of your child's health information. We will not retaliate in any way if you choose to file a complaint with us or the US Department of Health & Human Services.

***I understand the contents of the previous notice concerning the privacy of my confidential healthcare information. I do hereby provide consent for the standard use of such information and understand that these provisions prohibit Litchfield Smiles from selling or transferring this information to any unauthorized locations without my prior approval. I have reviewed this information and all questions have been answered to my satisfaction.***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Patient/ Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date