The Counseling Hut

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http://www.thecounselinghut.org/

HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices

Revised September 1, 2013

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.

By law, the Counseling Hut is required to protect the privacy of your personal health information. The Counseling Hut is also required to give you this notice to tell you how the Counseling Hut may use and give out ("disclose" or "release") your personal health information held by the Counseling Hut.

"Personal health information" includes any record of services you received at the Counseling Hut, including, and not limited to:

- Dates, times, and lengths of your counseling sessions;
- Information you shared during counseling sessions or at other times;
- Your counselor's observations of you;
- Your counselor's assessment of your mental health concerns;
- Results of psychological tests and diagnostic interviews;
- Treatment plans and homework suggestions;
- Medication records; and
- Billing and insurance information.

Most of your personal health information is in written form. Information about you that is not written down, but is remembered by staff members of the Counseling Hut, is also considered part of your personal health information, and is protected by law the same way written information is protected.

Information that cannot be traced back to you is not considered part of your personal health information. Examples include:

- Information about an experience you had that many people also had, and
- Information that is changed or made vague so that you cannot be associated with it.

The Counseling Hut must use and give out your personal health information to provide information:

- To you or someone who has the legal right to act for you (your personal representative),
- To the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, when the degree to which your privacy is protected is being examined, and
- Where required by law.

The Counseling Hut has the right to use and give out your personal health information to be paid for services provided to you, and to operate the Counseling Hut. For example:

- Insurance companies may ask for your personal health information as a condition for paying for services you received at the Counseling Hut.
- If your account is referred to a collection agency, the collection agency may ask for parts of your personal health information relevant to their task, such as dates of sessions.
- The Counseling Hut may use your personal health information to make sure you and other clients get quality care, to provide customer services to you, to resolve any complaints you have, or to contact you about research studies.

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The Counseling Hut may use or give out your personal health information for the following purposes under limited circumstances:

- To State and Federal agencies that have the legal right to obtain such information (such as a licensing board investigating an ethics complaint),
- For public health activities (such as reporting disease outbreaks),
- For government health care oversight activities (such as insurance fraud investigations),
- For judicial and administrative proceedings (such as in response to a court order),
- For law enforcement purposes (such as providing limited information to locate a missing person),
- For research studies that meet all privacy law requirements (such as research on effectiveness of a counseling technique),
- To avoid a serious and imminent threat to health or safety,
- For the purpose of supervision, consultation, and training, and
- To create a collection of information that can no longer be traced back to you.

By law, the Counseling Hut must have your written permission (an "authorization") to use or give out your personal health information for any purpose that isn't set out in this notice, such as marketing or sale of your personal health information. You may take back ("revoke") your written permission at any time, except if the Counseling Hut has already acted based on your permission.

By law, you have the right to:

- See and get a copy of your personal health information held by the Counseling Hut;
- Have your personal health information amended if you believe that it is wrong or if information is missing, and the Counseling Hut agrees. If the Counseling Hut disagrees, you may have a statement of your disagreement added to your personal health information;
- Get a listing of those getting your personal health information from the Counseling Hut. The listing won't cover your personal health information that was given to you or your personal representative, that was given out to be paid for the services your received or for operating the Counseling Hut, or that was given out for law enforcement purposes;
- Ask the Counseling Hut to communicate with you in a different manner or at a different place (for example, by sending materials to a P.O. Box instead of your home address);
- Ask the Counseling Hut to limit how your personal health information is used and given out in order to be paid for services you received or to operate the Counseling Hut. Please note that the Counseling Hut may not be able to agree to your request; and
- Get a separate paper copy of this notice.

If you believe the Counseling Hut has violated these privacy rights, you can file a complaint with:

- The Counseling Hut Privacy Officer

Jordan J. Shin, MS, LPC, 541-342-8144, jordan@thecounselinghut.org

or

- The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services

Contact the Office for Civil Rights, 1-866-627-7748, 1-800-537-7697 (TTY)
http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/

Filing a complaint will not affect the services you receive at the Counseling Hut.

By law, the Counseling Hut is required to follow the terms in this privacy notice. The Counseling Hut has the right to change the way your personal health information is used and given out. If the Counseling Hut makes any changes to the way your personal health information is used and given out while you are a current client at the Counseling Hut, you will get a new notice, directly or by mail, within 60 days of the change.