

## **NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES**

Michael A. O'Connell, PhD, MSW is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of your mental health and financial information, which will be referred to here as "personal information." Examples of your personal information include your name, social security number, address, telephone number, medical/psychosocial history, therapy records, claims information, etc. This Notice of Privacy Practices informs you about how Michael O'Connell may collect, use and disclose your personal information, and about your rights regarding that information. This Notice pertains to you and any dependents in counseling with Michael O'Connell.

### **MY RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), Michael A. O'Connell must take measures to protect the privacy of your personal information only to the extent necessary to conduct the Business of serving you, such as paying your claims. In addition, Michael A. O'Connell takes steps to secure client files and information from unauthorized access. Michael A. O'Connell's privacy policy and practices apply equally to personal information about current and former clients; Michael A. O'Connell will protect the privacy of your information even if you are no longer in treatment here.

### **HOW MICHAEL A. O'CONNELL MAY COLLECT, USE AND DISCLOSE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Michael A. O'Connell collects your personal information from these sources: in the course of accepting referral information to assess your eligibility for services with Michael A. O'Connell; from you directly; and/or from individuals or agencies you specifically authorize to share information with Michael A. O'Connell to assure good coordination of your care.

Michael A. O'Connell may use or disclose your personal information *without* your specific authorization for the following purposes:

- Ⓢ Payment: Michael A. O'Connell may use and disclose personal information to process your insurance claims. However, state laws may prohibit Michael A. O'Connell from disclosing certain types of sensitive personal information about you to insurers or to other members of your family without your specific authorization.
- Ⓢ Consultation: One way Michael A. O'Connell assures that you receive the highest quality of care possible, is through the use of professional consultation. Michael A. O'Connell has agreements with consultants that require them to maintain the confidentiality of your personal information. Michael A. O'Connell has a commitment to share as *little* identifying information as possible when seeking consultation.

- Ⓢ As Required by Law: Michael A. O'Connell may use or disclose your personal information when required by federal, state or local law. For example, I may disclose personal information to a health oversight agency, for activities such as audits, investigations, or related to licensure. Personal information may also be disclosed in response to a court order or subpoena, or to law enforcement officials during certain investigations.
- Ⓢ Public Health and Safety: Michael A. O'Connell may disclose personal information about you to the extent necessary to avert a serious and imminent threat to your health or safety or the health or safety of others.

For all other purposes, Michael A. O'Connell will request your specific authorization in writing, which you may grant or reject. If granted, the authorization remains in effect for ninety (90) days, although you can revoke it at any time by letting Michael A. O'Connell know in writing.

## YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING PERSONAL INFORMATION

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

- Ⓢ Inspection: You have the right to request information and to receive a copy of a record of your personal information.
- Ⓢ Amendment: If you feel the personal information that Michael A. O'Connell maintains about you is incorrect or incomplete, you have the right to request amendment to it.
- Ⓢ Restriction Request: You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the personal information Michael A. O'Connell discloses about you for treatment, payment or coordination of your care.
- Ⓢ Confidential Communications: You have the right to request that Michael A. O'Connell communicates with you about your treatment at a location that assures utmost privacy. For example, you may ask that Michael A. O'Connell only contact you at your work address/phone.
- Ⓢ Accounting of Disclosures: You have the right to an accounting of disclosures Michael A. O'Connell has made. The first list you request within a 12-month period will be free. For additional lists, Michael A. O'Connell may charge you a reasonable fee to cover copying and supply costs. All of these requests must be made in writing.

## CHANGES TO THIS NOTICE

Should any of Michael A. O'Connell's privacy practices change, this Notice will be revised and you will be provided a new copy of it. If you need an extra copy of this Notice or want more information about Michael A. O'Connell's privacy practices, please contact Michael A. O'Connell, PhD, MSW at 9800 Harbour Place, Suite 204, Mukilteo, WA 98275 (425) 374-8504.

## REPORTING A PROBLEM

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, or if you disagree with a decision Michael A. O'Connell has made about a request, you may file a written complaint with Michael A. O'Connell or the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). You will not be penalized in any way if you file a complaint about Michael A. O'Connell's privacy practices.

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Signature of Client

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Date

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Print name

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Witness Signature