

Patient Notice of Privacy Practices

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW DRUG, ALCOHOL AND OTHER HEALTH RELATED INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED, AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

Understanding Your Substance Abuse Health Record Information:

Each time that you visit us at Credo, we make a record of your visit. Typically, this record contains your treatment history, current symptoms, examination and test results, diagnoses, and plan for future care or treatment.

Understanding what is in your health records and how your health information is used helps you to:

- Ensure its accuracy and completeness.
- Understand who, what, where, why and how others may access your health information.
- Make informed decisions about authorizing disclosure to others.
- Better understand the health information rights detailed below.

Your Rights under the Federal Privacy Standard:

Although your chemical dependence treatment record is the physical property of the Credo Community Center (Credo), you have the following rights with regard to the information contained in your record:

- Right to request restriction on uses and disclosures of your chemical dependence treatment information for treatment, payment, and health care operations. “Health Care Operations” consist of activities that are necessary to carry out the operations of Credo, including quality assurance and peer review. The right to request restriction does not extend to uses or disclosures permitted or required under the law. We do not, however, have to agree to your request, except in the situation explained below. If we do agree, we will adhere to it unless you request otherwise or we give you advance notice
- Right to receive a copy of this notice of information practices. Although we have posted a copy in prominent locations throughout the facility and on our website, we are providing you this hard copy upon admission.
- Right to inspect and copy your chemical dependence treatment information upon request. Credo shall act on a request for access no later than 30 days after receipt of the request. Again, this right is not absolute. In certain situations, such as if access would cause harm, we can deny access. You do not have a right of access to the following:
 - Psychotherapy notes: Such notes consist of those notes that are recorded in any medium by a health care provider who is a mental health professional documenting or analyzing a conversation during a private, group, joint, or family counseling session and that are separated from the rest of your medical record.
 - Information compiled in reasonable anticipation of or for use in civil, criminal, or administrative actions or proceedings.
 - Protected health information (“PHI”) that is subject to the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988, to the extent that giving you access would be prohibited by law.
 - Information that was obtained from someone other than a health care provider under a promise of confidentiality and the requested access would be reasonably likely to reveal the source of the information.

In other situations, we may deny you access, but if we do, we must provide you a review of our decision denying access. These “reviewable” grounds for denial include the following:

- A licensed/credentialed health care professional, such as your Counselor, the facility Director or other Executive Management, has determined, in the exercise of professional judgment, that the access is reasonably likely to endanger the life or physical safety of yourself or another person.
- PHI makes reference to another person (other than a health care provider) and a licensed/credentialed health care provider has determined, in the exercise of professional judgment, that the access is reasonably likely to cause substantial harm to such other person.
- The request is made by your personal representative and a licensed/credentialed health care professional has determined, in the exercise of professional judgment, that giving access to such personal representative is reasonably likely to cause substantial harm to you or another person.

For these reviewable grounds, the Executive Director, or his designee, shall review the decision of the provider denying access within 60 days. If we deny you access, we will explain why and what your rights are, including how to seek review. If we grant access, we will tell you what, if anything, you have to do to get access. We reserve the right to charge a \$.75 per page fee for making copies.

- Right to request amendment/correction of your chemical dependence treatment information. Credo shall act on a request for an amendment no later than 60 days after receipt of the request. We do not have to grant the request if the following conditions exist:
 - We did not create the record.
 - The records are not available to you as discussed immediately above.
 - The record is accurate and complete.

If we deny your request for amendment/correction, we will notify you why, how you can attach a statement of disagreement to your records (which we may rebut), and how you can complain. If we grant the request, we will make the correction and distribute the correction to those who need it and those whom you identify to us that you want to receive the corrected information.

- Right to obtain an accounting to you upon request for uses and disclosures for treatment, payment, and health care operations. We do not need to provide an accounting for the following disclosures:
 - For disclosures of protected health information to you.
 - For the facility directory or to persons involved in your care or for other notification purposes as provided in the federal privacy regulations.
 - For national security or intelligence purposes under the federal privacy regulations.
 - To correctional institutions or law enforcement officials under the federal privacy regulations.

We must provide the accounting within 60 days. The accounting must include the following information:

- Date of each disclosure.
- Name and address of the organization or person who received the protected health information.
- Brief description of the information disclosed.
- Brief statement of the purpose of the disclosure that reasonably informs you of the basis for the disclosure or, in lieu of such statement, a copy of your written authorization or a copy of the written request for disclosure.

The first accounting in any 12-month period is free. Thereafter, we reserve the right to charge a \$.25 per page fee.

- Right to revoke your consent or authorization to use or disclose health information except to the extent that we have taken action in reliance on the consent or authorization.

Credo’s Responsibilities under the Federal Privacy Standard:

In addition to providing you your rights, as detailed above, the federal privacy standard requires Credo to take the following measures:

- Maintain the privacy of your chemical dependence treatment information, including implementing reasonable and appropriate physical, administrative, and technical safeguards to protect the information.

- Provide you this notice as to our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to individually identifiable health information that we collect and maintain about you.
- Abide by the terms of this notice.
- Train our personnel concerning privacy and confidentiality.
- Implement a sanction policy to discipline those who breach privacy/confidentiality or our policies with regard thereto.
- Mitigate (lessen the harm of) any breach of privacy/confidentiality.

Be advised, however, federal law permits Credo to disclose information without your written permission:

1. Pursuant to an agreement with a Qualified Service Organization;
2. For research, audit or evaluations;
3. To report a crime committed on Credo's premises or against Credo personnel;
4. To medical personnel in a medical emergency;
5. To appropriate authorities to report suspected child abuse or neglect; and
6. As determined by a court order consistent with Subpart E of 42 CFR 2.13.

Further, we will not use or disclose your chemical dependence treatment information without your consent or authorization, except as described in this notice or otherwise required by law.

Disclosure of Information for Payment Purposes:

Credo must obtain your written consent before we can disclose information to a health insurer in order to be paid for services.

How to Get More Information or to Report a Problem:

Should you have complaints, you may talk to your counselor or a manager. If you are not satisfied with the response, you may reach out to the Director of Corporate Compliance at 315-755-2528 (confidential line) or 1-877-534-6036 (toll free number).

If you prefer, a secure complaint box is located in a patient accessible location at each Credo site, along with complaint forms that can be used for that purpose. The Credo Compliance Officer will check each box regularly, collate the information and bring concerns to the Continuous Quality Improvement Committee for review. Complaints will be recorded when received, date reviewed, actions recommended, person responsible and date accomplished. You will not be retaliated against for filing such a complaint.

Or, you have the right to contact the NYS Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services Patient Advocacy Unit at 1-800-553-5790, and/or the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services if you believe that your privacy rights have been violated under HIPAA.

Or, you have the right to contact the Vulnerable Persons Central Register (VPRC) by calling the Justice Center Hotline 1-855-373-2122. TTY#: 1-855-373-2123.

WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CHANGE OUR PRACTICES AND TO MAKE THE NEW PROVISIONS EFFECTIVE FOR ALL INDIVIDUALLY IDENTIFIABLE HEALTH INFORMATION THAT WE MAINTAIN. IF WE CHANGE OUR INFORMATION PRACTICES, WE WILL MAIL A REVISED NOTICE TO THE ADDRESS THAT YOU HAVE GIVEN US.

Examples of Disclosures for Treatment, Payment, and Health Care Operations:

- With your *consent*, we will use your chemical dependence treatment information for chemical dependence treatment, payment and chemical dependence treatment program operations.

- *Research:* We may disclose information to researchers when their research has been approved by an institutional review board that has reviewed the research proposal and established protocols to ensure the privacy of your health information.
- *Law enforcement:* We may disclose health information for law enforcement purposes as required by law or in response to a Court Order.
- *The federal Department of Health and Human Services (“DHHS”):* Under the privacy standards, we must disclose your health information to DHHS as necessary to determine our compliance with those standards.

If you have questions and/or would like additional information, please feel free to contact the Credo Compliance Officer at 315-788-1530, Extension 213.