



*We care for Wisconsin.*

UNDERWRITTEN BY WPS HEALTH PLAN, INC.

**WPS Health Plan, Inc.  
PO Box 11625  
Green Bay, WI 54307-1625**

## **PRIVACY PRACTICES NOTICE**

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**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. THE PRIVACY OF YOUR MEDICAL INFORMATION IS IMPORTANT TO US.**

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### **Our Legal Duty**

We are required by applicable federal and state laws to maintain the privacy of your medical information. We are also required to give you this notice about our privacy practices, our legal duties, and your rights concerning your medical information. We must follow the privacy practices that are described in this notice while it is in effect. This notice takes effect April 14, 2003 and will remain in effect until we replace it.

We reserve the right to change our privacy practices and the terms of this notice at any time, provided that applicable law permits such changes. We reserve the right to make the changes in our

privacy practices and the new terms of our notice effective for all medical information that we maintain, including medical information we created or received before we made the changes. Before we make a significant change in our privacy practices, we will change this notice and send the new notice to our health plan subscribers at the time of the change.

You may request a copy of our notice at any time. For more information about our privacy practices, or for additional copies of this notice, please contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice.

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### **Organization Covered by this Notice**

This notice applies to the privacy practices of WPS Health Plan, Inc. WPS Health Plan, Inc. may participate in organized health care arrangements. As such, we may share your medical information and the medical information of others we serve as needed for the payment activities or health care operations relating to our organized health care arrangement.

We are committed to protecting the confidentiality and privacy of every aspect of service and care across the organization. We have developed, implemented, maintain, and use appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to protect the privacy of protected health information and to prevent intentional or unintentional use or disclosure in violation of law.

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### **Our Uses and Disclosures of Your Medical Information**

We use and disclose medical information about you for payment and health care operations, and disclose medical information about you for treatment. For example:

**Treatment:** We may disclose your medical information to your physicians or other health care providers so that they may provide treatment to you.

**Payment:** We may use and disclose your medical information to pay claims from physicians, hospitals and other providers for services delivered to you that are covered by your health plan, to determine your eligibility for benefits, to coordinate benefits, to examine medical necessity, to obtain premiums, to issue explanations of benefits to the person who subscribes to the health plan in which you participate, and the like. We may disclose your medical information to a health care provider or entity subject to the federal Privacy Rules so they can obtain payment or engage in these payment activities.

**Health Care Operations:** We may use and disclose your medical information in connection with our health care operations. Health care operations include:

- Rating our risk and determining our premiums for your health plan;
- Quality assessment and improvement activities;
- Reviewing the competence or qualifications of health care professionals, evaluating practitioner and provider performance, conducting training programs, accreditation, certification, licensing or credentialing activities;
- Medical review, legal services, and auditing, including fraud and abuse detection and compliance;
- Business planning and development; and
- Business management and general administrative activities, including management activities relating to privacy, customer service, resolution of internal grievances, and creating de-identified medical information or a limited data set.

We may disclose your medical information to another entity which has a relationship with you and is subject to the federal Privacy Rules, for their health care operations relating to quality assessment and improvement activities, reviewing the competence or qualifications of health care professionals, or detecting or preventing health care fraud and abuse.

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

**Your Family and Friends:** We may disclose your medical information to a family member, friend,

or other person to the extent necessary to help with your health care or with payment for your health care. We may use or disclose your name, location, and general condition or death to notify, or assist in the notification of (including identifying or locating), a person involved in your care.

Before we disclose your medical information to a person involved in your health care or payment for your health care, for which we do not have a written authorization, we will provide you with an opportunity to object to such uses or disclosures. If you are not present, or in the event of your incapacity or an emergency, we will disclose your medical information based on our professional judgment of whether the disclosure would be in your best interest.

We may also disclose summary information about the participants in your group health plan to the plan sponsor to use to obtain premium bids for the health insurance coverage offered through your group health plan or to decide whether to modify, amend or terminate your group health plan. The summary information we may disclose summarizes claims history, claims expenses, or types of claims experienced by the participants in your group health plan. The summary information will be stripped of demographic information about the participants in the group health plan, but the plan sponsor may still be able to identify you or other enrollees in your group health plan from the summary information.

**Underwriting:** We may receive your medical information for underwriting, premium rating or other activities relating to the creation, renewal or replacement of a contract of health insurance or health benefits. We will not use or further disclose this medical information for any other purpose, except as required by law, unless the contract of health insurance or health benefits is placed with us. In that case, our use and disclosure of your medical information will only be as described in this notice.

**Disaster Relief:** We may use or disclose your medical information to a public or private entity authorized by law or by its charter to assist in disaster relief efforts.

**Public Benefit:** We may use or disclose your medical information as authorized by law for the following purposes deemed to be in the public interest or benefit:

- As required by law;
- For public health activities, including disease and vital statistic reporting, child abuse reporting, FDA oversight, and to employers regarding work-related illness or injury;

- To report adult abuse, neglect, or domestic violence;
- To health oversight agencies;
- In response to court and administrative orders and other lawful processes;
- To law enforcement officials pursuant to subpoenas 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 person;
- To coroners, medical examiners, and funeral directors;
- To organ procurement organizations;
- To avert a serious threat to health and 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; and
- As authorized by state worker compensation laws.

**Health Related Services:** We may use your medical information to contact you with information about health related benefits and services or about treatment alternatives that may be of interest to you. We may disclose your medical information to a business associate to assist us with these activities.

We may use or disclose your medical information to encourage you to purchase or use a product or service by face-to-face communication, or to provide you with promotional gifts.

**Fundraising:** We may use your demographic information and the dates of your health care to contact you for our fundraising purposes. We may disclose this information to a business associate or foundation to assist us in our fundraising activities. We will provide you with any fundraising materials and a description of how you may opt out of receiving future fundraising communications.

## Individual Rights

**Access:** You have the right to look at or get copies of your medical information, with limited exceptions. You may request that we provide copies in a format other than photocopies. We will use the format you request unless we cannot practicably do so. You must make a request in writing to obtain access to your medical information. You may obtain a form to request access by using the contact information listed at the end of this notice. You may also request access by sending us a letter to the address at the end of this notice. If you request copies, we will charge you a flat fee of \$25 plus \$0.25 for each page, plus postage - if you want the copies mailed to you. If you request an alternative format, we will charge a cost-based fee for providing your medical information in that format. If you prefer, we will prepare a summary or an explanation of your medical information for a fee. Contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice for a full explanation of our fees – which may change from time to time.

**Disclosure Accounting:** You have the right to receive a list of instances in which we or our business associates disclosed your medical information for purposes other than for treatment, payment, health

care operations, or other instances authorized by you, and for certain other activities described in this notice, since April 14, 2003. We will provide you with the date on which we made the disclosure, the name of the person or entity to whom we disclosed your medical information, a description of the medical information we disclosed, the reason for the disclosure, and certain other information. If you request this list more than once in a 12-month period, we may charge you a reasonable, cost-based fee for responding to these additional requests. Contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice for a full explanation of our fees – which may change from time to time.

**Restriction:** You have the right to request that we place additional restrictions on our use or disclosure of your medical information. We are not required to agree to these additional restrictions, but if we do, we will abide by our agreement (except in an emergency). Any agreement to additional restrictions must be in writing signed by a person authorized to make such an agreement on our behalf. We will not be bound unless our agreement is so memorialized in writing.

**Confidential Communication:** You have the right to request that we communicate with you in confidence about your medical information by alternative means or to an alternative location. You must make your request in writing, and you must state that the information could endanger you if it is not communicated in confidence as you request. We must accommodate your request if it is reasonable, specifies the alternative means or location, and continues to permit us to collect premiums and pay claims under your health plan, including issuance of explanations of benefits to the subscriber of the health plan in which you participate. An explanation of benefits issued to the subscriber for health care that you received for which you did not request confidential communications, or about the subscriber or others covered by the health plan in which you participate, may contain sufficient information to reveal that you obtained healthcare for which we paid, even though you requested that we communicate with you about that health care in confidence.

**Amendment:** You have the right to request that we amend your medical information. Your request must be in writing, and it must explain why the information should be amended. We may deny your request if we did not create the information you want amended and the originator remains available, or for certain other reasons. If we deny your request, we will provide you a written explanation. You may respond with a statement of disagreement to be appended to the information you wanted amended. If we accept your request to amend the information, we will make reasonable efforts to inform others, including people you name, of the amendment and to include the changes in any future disclosures of that information.

**Electronic Notice:** If you receive this notice on our web site or by electronic mail (e-mail), you are entitled to receive this notice in written form. Please contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice to obtain this notice in written form.

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## Questions and Complaints

If you want more information about our privacy practices or have questions or concerns, please contact us using the information listed at the end of this notice.

If you are concerned that we may have violated your privacy rights, or you disagree with a decision we made about access to your medical information or in response to a request you made to amend or restrict the use or disclosure of your medical information or to have us communicate with you in confidence by alternative means or at an alternative

location, you may complain to us using the contact information listed at the end of this notice. You also may submit a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We will provide you with the address to file your complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services upon request.

We support your right to protect the privacy of your medical information. We will not retaliate in any way if you choose to file a complaint with us or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Contact Office: Privacy Official, WPS Health Plan, Inc., 2710 Executive Drive, Suite 200, Green Bay, WI 54304

Telephone: 920-490-6900 or 888-711-1444