

The Country Doctor, Ltd. does not use or disclose any PHI for marketing purposes, research activities, employers, or health plan sponsors. The Country Doctor, Ltd. does not engage in communications about products and services that encourages a recipient of the communication to purchase or use the product or service for treatment, to direct or recommend alternative treatments, therapies, health care providers, or settings of care to the individual.

The Country Doctor, Ltd. informs the individual of the reporting of PHI unless the practice, in the exercise of professional judgment, believes informing the individual would place the individual at risk of serious harm or The Country Doctor, Ltd. would be informing a personal representative, and The Country Doctor, Ltd. believes the personal representative is responsible for the abuse, neglect, or other injury with the risk that informing such person would not be in the best interests of the individual. If an individual wants The Country Doctor, Ltd. to release his or her PHI to employers or health plan sponsors, for underwriting and related purposes, for facility directories, or to brokers and agents, then he or she can contact The Country Doctor, Ltd. and complete an appropriate written authorization.

A patient may request copies of a medical record, a privacy disclosure list and an amendment to PHI in the medical records. The Country Doctor, Ltd. tracks all disclosures of a patient's PHI that occur for other than the purposes of treatment, payment, and health care operations, that are not made to the individual or to a person involved in the patient's care, that are not made as a result of a patient authorization, and that are not made for national security or intelligence purposes or to correctional institutions or law enforcement officials. An individual can request an accounting of disclosures for a period of up to six years prior to the date of the request, and an individual can request to inspect and copy PHI of the medical record. Amendments to the PHI may be requested by the patient. Patients may only request an accounting of disclosures or an amendment to the medical records dated after April 13, 2003. The Country Doctor, Ltd. responds to all requests for an accounting of disclosures, medical records copying, and/or amendments to PHI within 60 days of receipt of the request. If The Country Doctor, Ltd. intends to provide the accounting for disclosures, the medical records copies, or allows amendments to the PHI, and cannot do so within 60 days, then The Country Doctor, Ltd. informs the requester of such and provides a date that the request is expected to be fulfilled, with up to one 30-day extension permitted. A request for an accounting for disclosures or for medical records must be made in writing and sent to the practice. It should be marked "Attention: Privacy Officer."

The Country Doctor, Ltd. allows individuals to inspect and copy their PHI, documents all requests, responds to those requests in a timely fashion, informs individuals of their appeal rights when a request is rejected in whole or in part, and charges a reasonable fee for the copying of records and health disclosure information documents. Each request will be accepted or denied, with the requester notified. If a request is denied, the requester is informed if the denial is "reviewable" or not. The requester has the right to have any denial reviewed by a licensed health care professional who is designated by The Country Doctor, Ltd. as a reviewing official and who did not participate in the original decision to deny. The Country Doctor, Ltd. informs the requester of the decision of the reviewing official and adheres to the decision. The Country Doctor, Ltd. charges reasonable fees based on actual cost of fulfilling the request and based on the Illinois State Mandated Medical Records Copying Fees, with the appropriate charge for providing the requested documents stated to the requester in advance of providing the documents. If the requester agrees to pay the fee in advance, the records will be provided. Otherwise, the records will not be provided, unless the Privacy Officer determines that the charge is burdensome to the requester.

The Country Doctor, Ltd. accommodates all reasonable requests to keep communications confidential and to restrict disclosure of PHI. The Country Doctor, Ltd. determines the reasonableness based on the administrative difficulty of complying with the request. A request for confidential communications or restriction of PHI must be in writing, must specify an alternative address or other method of contact, and must provide information about how payment will be handled. The request must be addressed to the practice's privacy officer at The Country Doctor. No reason for the request needs to be stated. The Country Doctor, Ltd. will reject a request due to administrative difficulty: if no independently verifiable method of communication such as a mailing address or published telephone number is provided for communications, including billing; or if the requester has not provided information as to how payment will be handled. The Country Doctor, Ltd. will not refuse a request: if the requester indicates that the communication will cause endangerment; or based on any perception of the merits of the requestor's request.

At the first visit, The Country Doctor, Ltd. obtains a written authorization from a patient or the patient's representative for the use or disclosure of PHI for use for treatment, payment, or health care operations, but The Country Doctor, Ltd. will not get an authorization for the use or disclosure of PHI specifically allowed under the Privacy Rule in the absence of an authorization. The Country Doctor, Ltd. will provide a patient upon request a copy of any authorization initiated by The Country Doctor, Ltd. (as opposed to requested by the patient) and signed by the patient. The Country Doctor, Ltd. does not condition treatment of a patient on the signing of an authorization, except disclosure necessary to determine payment of a billing claim (excluding authorization for use or disclosure of psychotherapy notes); or provision of health care solely for purpose of creating PHI for disclosure to a third party (e.g., pre-employment or life insurance physicals). In Illinois, a specific written authorization is required to disclose or release of mental health treatment, alcoholism treatment, drug abuse treatment or HIV/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) information. The Country Doctor, Ltd. allows an individual to revoke an authorization at any time, with the revocation in writing and to be sent to the attention of the practice's privacy officer. The Country Doctor, Ltd. will be able to use or disclose the PHI to the extent practice has taken action in reliance on the authorization. The Country Doctor, Ltd. never requires an individual to waive any of his or her individual rights as a condition for the provision of treatment, except under very limited circumstances allowed under law.