



NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

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.

BTC

Bellingham Technical College (BTC) is a teaching institution. Patient care in the Dental Clinic/Dental Hygiene Clinic is provided by licensed dental professionals and/or students who are supervised by licensed dental professional instructors. This Notice applies to information and records regarding your health care maintained at BTC.

Our Pledge Regarding Your Medical Information

BTC is committed to protecting medical information about you. We create a record of the services you receive at BTC for use in your dental care and treatment. This Notice tells you about the ways in which we may use and disclose medical information about you. It also describes your rights and certain obligations we have regarding the use and disclosure of your medical information. BTC abides by all applicable state and federal laws related to the protection of this information.

We are required by law to:

- make sure that your medical information is protected;
- give you this Notice describing our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to medical information about you; and
- follow the terms of the Notice that is currently in effect.

How We May Use and Disclose Medical Information About You

For Treatment. We may use medical information about you to provide dental treatment or services. We may disclose medical information about you to doctors, nurses, technicians, students, or other health system personnel who are involved in providing your health care. For example, a dentist treating you for a broken tooth may need to know if you have diabetes because diabetes may slow the healing process. We may disclose medical information about you to people outside BTC who may be involved in your continuing medical care after you leave BTC, such as other health care providers, community agencies and family members.

For Payment. We may use and disclose medical information about you so that the treatment and services you receive at BTC may be billed to and payment may be collected from you, an insurance company or a third party. For example, we may need to give information to your health plan about dental care you received at BTC so your health plan will pay us or reimburse you. We may also tell your health plan about a proposed treatment to determine whether your plan will pay for the treatment.

For Health Care Operations. We may use and disclose medical information about you for BTC quality assurance and dental staff activities to find ways to improve treatment and services to our patients. Your medical information may also be used or disclosed to comply with law and regulation, for contractual obligations, patients' claims, grievances or lawsuits, health care contracting, legal services, business planning and development, business management and administration, underwriting and other insurance activities and to operate the health system. For example, we may review medical information in the course of chart audits to ensure that patients receive standard of care for dental treatments.

Appointment Reminders. We may contact you to remind you that you have an appointment at BTC.

Treatment Alternatives. We may tell you about or recommend possible treatment options or alternatives that may be of interest to you.

News Gathering Activities. A member of your health care team may contact you or one of your family members to discuss whether or not you want to participate in a media or news story. For example, a reporter working on a story about oral health may ask whether any of the patients might be willing to be interviewed.

Individuals Involved in Your Care or Payment for Your Care. We may release medical information to anyone involved in your medical care, e.g., a friend, family member, personal representative, or any individual you identify. We may also give information to someone who helps pay for your care.

Research. We may use and disclose medical information about our patients for research purposes, subject to the confidentiality provisions of state and federal law. These studies will not affect your treatment or welfare, and your medical information will continue to be protected. For example, a research study may involve a chart review to compare the outcomes of patients who received different types of treatment.

As Required By Law. We will disclose medical information about you when required to do so by federal or state law.

To Avert a Serious Threat to Health or Safety. We may use and disclose medical information about you when necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of the public or another person. Any disclosure would be to someone able to help stop or reduce the threat.

Military and Veterans. If you are or were a member of the armed forces, we may release medical information about you to military command authorities as authorized or required by law. We may also release medical information about foreign military personnel to the appropriate foreign military authority as authorized or required by law.

Workers' Compensation. We may use or disclose medical information about you for Workers' Compensation or similar programs as authorized or required by law. These programs provide benefits for work-related injuries or illnesses.

Public Health Disclosures. We may disclose medical information about you for public health purposes. These purposes generally include the following:

- preventing or controlling disease (such as cancer and tuberculosis), injury or disability;
- reporting child abuse or neglect;
- reporting adverse events or surveillance related to food, medications or defects or problems with products;
- notifying persons of recalls, repairs or replacements of products they may be using;
- notifying a person who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk of contracting or spreading a disease or condition;
- reporting to the employer findings concerning a work-related illness or injury or workplace-related medical surveillance;
- notifying the appropriate government authority if we believe a patient has been the victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence and make this disclosure as authorized or required by law.

Health Oversight Activities. We may disclose medical information to governmental, licensing, auditing, and accrediting agencies as authorized or required by law.

Lawsuits and Other Legal Actions. In connection with lawsuits or other legal proceedings, we may disclose medical information about you in response to a court or administrative order, or in response to a subpoena, discovery request, warrant, summons or other lawful process.

Law Enforcement, Coroners, Medical Examiners. If asked to do so by law enforcement, a coroner or medical examiner and as authorized or required by law, we may release medical information.

National Security and Intelligence Activities. As authorized or required by law, we may disclose medical information about you to authorized federal officials for intelligence, counterintelligence, and other national security activities.

Your Rights Regarding Medical Information About You

Your medical information is the property of BTC. You have the following rights, however, regarding medical information we maintain about you:

Right to Inspect and Copy. With certain exceptions, you have the right to inspect and/or receive a copy of your medical information. To inspect and/or to receive a copy of your medical information, you must submit your request in writing to the BTC Dental Clinic, 3028 Lindbergh Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225.

If you request a copy of the information, there is a fee for these services.

Right to Request an Amendment or Addendum. If you feel that medical information we have about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information or add an addendum (addition to the record). You have the right to request an amendment or addendum for as long as the information is kept by or for BTC.

Amendment. To request an amendment, your request must be made in writing and submitted to the BTC Dental Clinic, 3028 Lindbergh Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225.

Addendum. To submit an addendum, the addendum must be made in writing to the BTC Dental Clinic, 3028 Lindbergh Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225. The addendum may not exceed 250 words.

Right to an Accounting of Disclosures. You have the right to receive a list of the disclosures we have made of your medical information. To request this accounting of disclosures, you must submit your request in writing to the BTC Dental Clinic, 3028 Lindbergh Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225.

Right to Request Restrictions. You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the medical information we use or disclose about you for treatment, payment or health care operations. You must make your request in writing to the BTC Dental Clinic, 3028 Lindbergh Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225. In your request, you must tell us (1) what information you want to limit; (2) whether you want to limit our use, disclosure or both; and (3) to whom you want the limits to apply, for example, only to you and your spouse. We are not required to agree to your request. If we do agree, our agreement must be in writing, and we will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide you emergency treatment.

Right to Request Confidential Communications. You have the right to request that we communicate with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location, such as only by mail or electronic mail. To request confidential communications, you must make your request in writing to the BTC Dental Clinic, 3028 Lindbergh Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225. We will accommodate all reasonable requests.

Right to a Paper Copy of This Notice. You have the right to a paper copy of this Notice. You may ask us to give you a copy of this Notice at any time. Even if you have agreed to receive this Notice electronically, you are still entitled to a paper copy of this Notice. Copies of this Notice are available in the BTC Dental Clinic.

Changes to BTC's Privacy Practices and This Notice

We reserve the right to change BTC's privacy practices and this Notice. We reserve the right to make the revised or changed Notice effective for medical information we already have about you as well as any information we receive in the future. We will promptly revise and distribute a notice whenever material changes are made to privacy practices.

Questions or Complaints

If you have any questions about this Notice, please contact the Dental Clinic, 3028 Lindbergh Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225. Phone: 360-752-8354. If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with BTC or with the Office for Civil Rights, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
2201 Sixth Avenue - M/S: RX-11
Seattle, WA 98121-1831
Voice Phone (206)615-2290
FAX (206)615-2297
TDD (206)615-2296

To file a written complaint with BTC, contact the Dental Clinic, 3028 Lindbergh Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225 phone: 360-752-8354.

You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.

This notice is posted on the BTC website:

<http://www.btc.ctc.edu>