

UAF STUDENT HEALTH AND COUNSELING CENTER

Notice of Privacy Practices

Confidentiality of Health Records Under the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)

The privacy of your health information is important to all of us at UAF Student Health and Counseling Center (SHCC). This Notice will tell you about the ways we utilize and disclose your health information and how we protect your privacy by complying with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

What is FERPA?

FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of students' "education records." The University of Alaska Fairbanks follows FERPA regulations because it receives funds that are administered by the U.S. Department of Education. Under FERPA, "education records" are very broadly defined as records that are directly related to a student and are kept by an educational agency or institution, or someone acting for the agency or institution.

Does UAF have a policy that describes how it complies with FERPA?

Yes. UAF's FERPA policy can be found at the following webpage: <https://www.alaska.edu/student-services/ferpa/>.

How does FERPA apply to my records at the Student Health and Counseling Center?

Under FERPA, the records maintained by the SHCC are either "treatment records" or "education records." The majority of records maintained at the SHCC are considered to be "treatment records" under FERPA, including the records created by your healthcare provider while providing you with care. "Treatment records" are records that are made or maintained by a health care professional, are used only for your medical treatment, and are only available to treatment providers. We do not disclose your treatment records without your authorization except for situations described below.

How does the Student Health and Counseling Center use my Treatment Records?

The SHCC uses your treatment records to provide you with healthcare services. We may disclose your records to other healthcare providers who are also providing you with treatment without your consent. In general, however, we will ask you to sign a written consent form before we provide your information to another healthcare provider that is outside of this facility. In addition, if there is an emergency situation, we may provide this information to other providers for your treatment without having you sign a written consent.

Medical information about you may be used or disclosed by the SHCC for treatment, payment, and health care operations. Treatment includes consultation, diagnosis, provision of care, and referrals. Payment includes all those things necessary for billing and collection, such as claims processing. Health care operations include things the SHCC does to assess quality of care, train staff, and manage SHCC business. Some examples of disclosures and use are as follows:

- *Example of Treatment Disclosure.* We may disclose medical information about you to your treating health care provider, a hospital or other providers to help them diagnose and treat an injury or illness.
- *Example of Payment Disclosure.* We may disclose medical information about you when health plans or insurers, Medicare, Medicaid, or other payers require the information before paying for your health care services.
- *Example of Health Care Operations Use.* We may use medical information about you for internal quality improvement studies to review the quality of care delivered by our staff.

The SHCC may also contact you to provide appointment reminders or cancellations or to ask you to contact us for purposes related to your health care. We may leave this limited information on an answering machine, voicemail, or text message at the numbers you provided or at an e-mail address you provided unless you request a restriction regarding these methods of communicating with you. In addition, our electronic records system allows us to send you secure messages via email which are accessible to you only after you enter appropriate credentials.

Can my Student Health Center treatment records be shared with people other than healthcare providers without my consent?

FERPA regulations list some circumstances under which your records may be disclosed without your prior written