



## **SUMMARY: NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES** **Revised May 1<sup>st</sup> 2025**

Sincera™ respects your privacy and safeguards your health information from unnecessary use and disclosure. Sincera's Business Associates, who perform functions on our behalf using our patients' protected health information, must comply with specific federal HIPAA privacy and security requirements. This summary of our *Notice of Privacy Practices* describes your rights and Sincera's responsibilities, under the HIPAA Final Rule.

### **SINCERA MAY USE AND DISCLOSE YOUR PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION:**

- To provide Sincera services;
- To obtain payment from your insurance company for services rendered;
- To conduct daily health care operations, such as staff training, business management, etc.
- To obtain your treatment records from other facilities;
- To report crimes, abuse, neglect or domestic violence, as legally required;
- To maintain public health and safety;
- To cooperate with law enforcement, governmental agencies and the military;
- To respond to court orders.

### **SEPARATE WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION IS REQUIRED:**

- From you or your legal representative before Sincera discloses your health information for any reason other than as stated above, including selling your name or health information, sending marketing materials to you and enrolling you in a research study or product trial;
- You or your legal representative may revoke an authorization in writing at any time.

### **YOU HAVE THESE RIGHTS REGARDING YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION:**

- To receive confidential communications from Sincera personnel;
- To receive a paper copy of the *Notice of Privacy Practices*;
- To request restrictions on how your health information is used and disclosed;
- To restrict disclosures to your insurance company when you pay for services in full out-of-pocket;
- To examine your record, amend your record, request corrections and obtain copies of your record;
- To obtain a copy of your electronic medical record in electronic form;
- To receive an accounting of disclosures of your health information made by Sincera;
- To be notified by Sincera if your health information is used or disclosed improperly;
- To express complaints when your privacy rights are violated.

### **SINCERA IS REQUIRED TO:**

- Maintain the privacy of your health information;
- Notify you if your unsecured protected health information is disclosed inappropriately;
- Abide by the terms of the *Notice of Privacy Practices*;
- Provide you a copy of the *Notice of Privacy Practices* and all consents you sign;
- Notify you when our privacy policy is changed or updated.

You are encouraged to read the complete *Notice of Privacy Practices*, attached here.



*Supportive Care and Symptom Relief*

## NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

**Revised May 1, 2025,**

**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.**

Sincera™ has established a policy to guard against unnecessary use and disclosure of your protected health information. As defined in the HIPAA Final Rule, Sincera may use your health information for the purposes explained below, including providing your treatment, obtaining payment for your care and conducting its health care operations.

### ***SINCERA MAY USE OR DISCLOSE YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION***

**To Provide Treatment,** Sincera may need to consult other care team members such as physicians, nurse practitioners, family members, pharmacists, and other health care professionals before making appropriate symptom management recommendations to your physician.

All persons providing your care need to know and use specific portions of your protected health information to perform their services for you. For example, Sincera needs to know all prescription and over-the-counter medications you are taking in order to prescribe or suggest appropriate pain control measures.

**To Obtain Payment,** your health information may be included in invoices when billing insurance companies, Medicare, Medicaid and other third parties for Sincera care provided to you.

Sincera may be required to obtain pre-approval before the consultation and explain your need for care to your insurance company. For example, your health insurance company may require Sincera to provide information concerning your health care status before paying the bill.

**To Conduct Health Care Operations,** your protected health information is used by Sincera to improve the quality of its services, for staff training and evaluation programs, accreditation surveys, certification, licensure, audits and business planning. For example, Sincera may review your health information to evaluate staff performance, to determine how to serve patients more effectively and to train new and contracted personnel.

Sincera uses only names, addresses and dates of care to send you and/or your family Satisfaction Surveys and other routine mailings. You may decline specific mailings from Sincera at any time by calling (419) 931-3440. Likewise, you may resume receiving mailings later by calling the same number.

**When Legally Required** by federal, state and/or local laws.

**To Report Abuse, Neglect and Domestic Violence.** Sincera will report incidents when a patient is the victim, as required or authorized by law, or when you agree to the disclosure.

**When there Are Risks to Public Health.** Sincera is required to report communicable diseases to the Health Department, which notifies persons who have been exposed, to help prevent or control injury, disease, death or disability. Employers may be notified of an infected employee who could expose others. Sincera must cooperate with public health surveillance, investigations and interventions, and must report adverse reactions and product defects to The Food and Drug Administration.

**To Conduct Health Oversight Activities.** Sincera must provide protected health information to oversight agencies for audits, civil or criminal investigations, inspections, licensure or disciplinary action.

**In Connection with Judicial and Administrative Proceedings.** Sincera must respond to a subpoena, discovery request or other lawful process, and will make reasonable efforts to notify you about the request or obtain an order protecting your health information.

**For Law Enforcement Purposes.** Receipt of a court order, warrant, subpoena or summons requires Sincera to report certain types of wounds or other physical injuries. Sincera will report a crime when you are a victim or has knowledge of a crime, and will cooperate with law enforcement to identify or locate a suspect, fugitive, material witness or missing person.

**In the Event of a Serious Threat to Health and Safety.** Consistent with law and ethical standards of conduct, Sincera will report imminent threats when necessary to prevent or lessen the impact to your health and safety, or to public health and safety.

**For Specified Government Functions.** Federal regulations authorize Sincera to use and disclose protected health information to facilitate specified government functions related to the military, veterans, national security, intelligence activities, protection of the President, medical suitability determinations, and inmates in law enforcement custody.

**For Worker's Compensation or Similar Programs.** Sincera will disclose your protected health information to appropriate payers when your illness is the result of work-related injury or exposure.

## ***WHEN SEPARATE WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION IS REQUIRED***

You or your representative must sign a separate, specific authorization permitting the use or disclosure of your health information for purposes other than those stated above, including research study and product trial participation and marketing activities for which Sincera will receive money. Your physicians receive copies of Sincera visit reports and recommendations. Your written, signed authorization is required before Sincera discloses your records to other recipients. The authorization must include the reason for the use/disclosure and you may revoke the authorization in writing at any time before it is executed. Sincera will not sell your name or protected health information without your written authorization.

## ***YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION***

Federal law guarantees you specific rights regarding your health information maintained by Sincera. If you wish to exercise the following rights, please speak with your Sincera clinical practitioner.

**Right to a paper copy of this Notice.** Every Sincera patient receives a copy of the current Notice at the initial consultation, and may request an additional copy at any time. You may also view and print a copy of the Sincera Notice of Privacy Practices online at [www.sinceracare.org](http://www.sinceracare.org).

**Right to receive confidential communications.** You may request that Sincera personnel communicate with you in a certain way. For example, you want Sincera to discuss health information with you alone, without family members present. Sincera will not require that you provide any reasons for your request and will honor your requests to the best of our ability.

**Right to request restrictions.** You may request to limit certain uses and disclosures of your protected health information, such as the amount of health information disclosed to persons involved in your care or for payment of your care. Sincera will honor your request if at all possible. If your request may cause harm to you or make it impossible to provide Sincera services to you, Sincera will reach a mutually agreeable alternative solution with you. If you pay for services in full out-of-pocket, you may restrict Sincera from sending a claim for these services to your insurance company.

**Right to inspect and obtain copies of your protected health information.** You may request a meeting to review and discuss your Sincera health information. You may request copies of your Sincera record and your billing record. The first copy of your record is free to you or your legal representative and a reasonable fee is charged for additional copies. Electronic records may be requested in electronic format. If Sincera is unable to fulfill this request, records will be provided in a format agreeable to both you and Sincera.

**Right to amend health care information.** If you believe that your records are incorrect or incomplete, you may make a written request to amend your record. You must identify the error or omission in the record and state the reason for the amendment. Sincera will enter your written amendment into your record unless the disputed records were not created by Sincera or the records are not part of the legal Sincera record.

**Right to an accounting.** You may request an accounting of disclosures made by Sincera for reasons other than treatment, payment or health operations. Reportable disclosures include public purposes authorized by law and certain research purposes. The first accounting during any 12-month period is provided without cost, with a reasonable fee charged for subsequent requests.

**Right to express complaints.** If you believe your protected health information was improperly used or disclosed, violating your privacy rights, you have the right to complain to Sincera and to the Secretary of the Dept. of Health and Human Services. Sincera encourages you to express your concerns in writing, addressed to the Privacy Officer. Your care will **not** be negatively affected in any way for filing a complaint.

**Right to be informed of improper disclosures.** If Sincera discovers that your protected health information was improperly used or disclosed, you have the right to be informed in writing. Sincera will inform you and the Department of Health and Human Services regarding violations of your privacy rights.

## ***DUTIES OF SINCERA***

Sincera is required by federal law to:

- Maintain the privacy of your protected health information.
- Provide you/your representative a copy of the current *Notice of Privacy Practices*.
- Abide by the terms of this *Notice*.
- Maintain the privacy of your protected health information for 50 years after discharge.

Sincera reserves the right to change the terms of this *Notice* when HIPAA laws are modified and when Sincera revises its privacy policies. If Sincera changes its *Notice* while you are an active patient, Sincera will provide you/your legal representative a copy of the revised *Notice of Privacy Practices* identifying the changes made.

## ***CONTACT PERSON***

If you have questions or wish to exercise your rights as explained in this Notice of Privacy Practices, please call (419) 931-3440.