

Email Protocol
Risks, Conditions and Instructions

Risk of Using Email

Doctors Care offers patients the opportunity to communicate by email. Transmitting patient information by email, however, has a number of risks that patients should consider before using email. These include, but are not limited to, the following risks:

- Email can be circulated, forwarded and stored in numerous paper and electronic files.
- Email can be immediately broadcast worldwide and be received by many intended and unintended recipients.
- Email senders can easily misaddress an email.
- Email is easier to falsify than handwritten or signed documents.
- Backup copies of email may exist even after the sender or the recipient has deleted his or her copy.
- Employers and online services have a right to archive and inspect emails transmitted through their systems.
- Email can be intercepted, altered, forwarded or used without authorization or detection.
- Email can be used to introduce viruses into computer systems.
- Email can be used as evidence in court.

Conditions for the Use of Email

Doctors Care will use reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of email information sent and received. However, because of the risks outlined above, Doctors Care cannot guarantee the security and confidentiality of email communication unless the email is encrypted through a secure server, and will not be liable for improper use and/or disclosure of confidential information (including Protected Health Information that is the subject of the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) that is not caused by Doctors Care's intentional misconduct. Thus, patients must consent to the use of email for patient information. Consent to the use of email includes agreement with the following conditions:

- All emails to or from the patient containing health information will be printed or electronically attached to the patient's file. Because they are part of the patient's file, other individuals authorized to access the file, such as staff and eligibility personnel, will have access to those emails.
- Doctors Care may forward emails to Doctors Care's staff and partners as necessary for diagnosis, treatment, billing, eligibility and other handling. Doctors Care will not, however, forward emails to independent third parties without the patient's prior written consent, except as authorized or required by law.
- Although Doctors Care will endeavor to read and respond promptly to an email from the patient, Doctors Care cannot guarantee that any particular email will be read and responded to within any

particular period of time. Thus, the patient shall not use email for medical emergencies or other time-sensitive matters.

- If the patient's email requires or invites a response from Doctors Care, and the patient has not received a response within a reasonable time period, it is the patient's responsibility to follow up to determine whether the intended recipient received the email and when the recipient will respond.
- The patient is advised not to use email for communication regarding sensitive medical information, such as information regarding sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS/HIV, mental health, developmental disability or substance abuse.
- The patient is responsible for informing the practice of any types of information the patient does not want sent by email.
- The patient is responsible for protecting his/her password or other means of access to email. Doctors Care is not liable for breaches of confidentiality caused by the patient or any third party.
- The patient shall not pass along information by email that is not related to the patient's care or enrollment in the Doctors Care program, such as email chains, forwards or advertisements.
- It is the patient's responsibility to follow up and/or schedule an appointment if warranted.

Instructions

To communicate by email, the patient shall:

- Limit or avoid use of his/her employer's computer.
- Inform Doctors Care of changes in his/her email address.
- Put the patient's name in the body of the email.
- Include the category of the communication in the email's subject line, for organizational purposes (e.g. billing question).
- Review the email to make sure it is clear and that all relevant information is provided before sending to Doctors Care.
- Inform Doctors Care if the email is in response to an email received from Doctors Care.
- Take precautions to preserve the confidentiality of emails, such as using screen savers and safeguarding his/her computer password.
- Withdraw consent to email through either email or written communication to Doctors Care.
- Contact the Patient Care Coordinator at (720) 458-6200 with any unanswered questions before communicating with Doctors Care via email.

Frequently Used Emails

Michelle Hartman, Program Director: mhartman@doctorscare.org

Bernadette Loya, Spanish-speaking Case Manager: bloya@doctorscare.org

General Information: information@doctorscare.org



Email Consent

I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the information Doctors Care has provided me regarding the risks of using email. I understand the risks associated with the communication of email between Doctors Care and me, and consent to the conditions outlined in the protocol. In addition, I agree to the instructions outlined in the following pages as well as any other instructions that Doctors Care may impose regarding email communications.

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Email Address(es) Doctors Care is permitted to use: _____

Signature: _____