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INFORMED CONSENT REGARDING EMAIL OR THE INTERNET USE OF PROTECTED PERSONAL INFORMATION

Linae Healthspan Institute provides patients the opportunity to communicate with their physicians, health care providers, and administrative staff by e-mail. Transmitting confidential health information by e-mail, however, has a number of risks, both general and specific, that should be considered before using e-mail.

1. Risks:
 - a. General e-mail risks are the following: e-mail can be immediately broadcast worldwide and be received by many intended and unintended recipients; recipients can forward e-mail messages to other recipients without the original sender(s) permission or knowledge; users can easily misaddress an e-mail; e-mail is easier to falsify than handwritten or signed documents; backup copies of e-mail may exist even after the sender or the recipient has deleted his/her copy.
 - b. Specific e-mail risks are the following: e-mail containing information pertaining to diagnosis and/or treatment must be included in the protected personal health information; all individuals who have access to the protected personal health information will have access to the e-mail messages; patients who send or receive e-mail from their place of employment risk having their employer read their e-mail.
2. It is the policy of Linae Healthspan Institute that all e-mail messages sent or received which concern the diagnosis or treatment of a patient will be a part of that patient's protected personal health information and will treat such e-mail messages or internet communications with the same degree of confidentiality as afforded other portions of the protected personal health information. Linae Healthspan institute will use reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of e-mail or internet communication.
3. Patients must consent to the use of e-mail for confidential medical information after having been informed of the above risks. Consent to the use of e-mail includes agreement with the following conditions:
 - a. All emails to or from patients concerning diagnosis and/or treatment will be made a part of the protected personal health information. As a part of the protected personal health information, other individuals, such as Linae Healthspan Institute's physicians, nurses, other health care practitioners, insurance coordinators and upon written authorization other health care providers and insurers will have access to e-mail messages contained in protected personal health information.
 - b. Linae Healthspan Institute may forward e-mail messages within the practice as necessary for diagnosis and treatment. Linae Healthspan Institute will not, however, forward the email outside the practice without the consent of the patient as required by law.
 - c. Linae Healthspan Institute will endeavor to read e-mail promptly but can provide no assurance that the recipient of a particular e-mail will read the e-mail message promptly. Therefore, e-mail must not be used in a medical emergency.
 - d. It is the responsibility of the sender to determine whether the intended recipient received the e-mail and when the recipient will respond.
 - e. Because some medical information is so sensitive that unauthorized discloser can be very damaging, e-mail should not be used for communications concerning diagnosis or treatment of AIDS/HIV infection; other sexually transmissible or communicable diseases, such as syphilis, gonorrhea, herpes, and the like; Behavioral health, Mental health or developmental disability; or alcohol and drug abuse.
 - f. Linae Healthspan Institute cannot guarantee that electronic communications will be private. However, we will take reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of the e-mail or internet communication but Linae Healthspan Institute is not liable for improper disclosure of confidential information not caused by its employee's gross negligence or wanton misconduct.
 - g. If consent is given for the use of e-mail, it is the responsibility of the patient's to inform Linae Healthspan Institute of any types of information you do not want to be sent by e-mail.
 - h. It is the responsibility of the patient to protect their password or other means of access to e-mail sent or received from Linae Healthspan Institute to protect confidentiality. Linae Healthspan Institute is not liable for breaches of confidentiality caused by the patient.

Any further use of e-mail initiated by the patient that discusses diagnosis or treatment constitutes informed consent to the foregoing. I understand that my consent to the use of e-mail may be withdrawn at any time by e-mail or written communication to Linae Healthspan Institute.

I have read this form carefully and understand the risks and responsibilities associated with the use of e-mail.

I agree to assume all risks associated with the use of e-mail.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

