

Patient Guide

Information for your stay

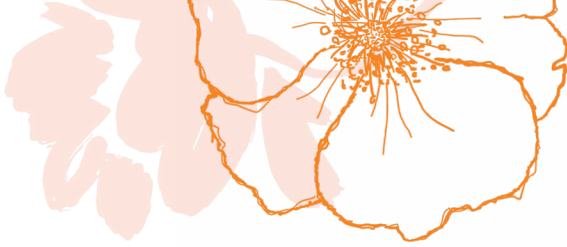


Real change lives here

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Welcome

Dear Valued Patient,

Thank you for the privilege of caring for you during your stay at Piedmont Cartersville. Your care, comfort and satisfaction are our highest priority.

Piedmont is empowering Georgians by leading change in health care. We continue to fuel Georgia's growth through safe, high-quality care close to home - an integrated health care system that provides a hassle-free and unified experience. We are a private, not-for-profit organization that for centuries has lived up to our purpose to make a positive difference in every life we touch in the communities we serve. Piedmont Cartersville is a Certified Primary Stroke Center, Level III Designated Trauma Center and Level II NICU Center and we provide diagnostic and interventional cardiac services in state of the art cardiac catheterization labs.

Our imaging services, including PET/CT, nuclear medicine, ultrasound, MRI, CT, Mammography, Breast MRI and stereotactic breast biopsy services are gold seal accredited by the American College of Radiology. We offer a wide range of surgical services, including robotic surgery, and our Advanced Wound Healing Center provides specialized treatment for chronic or non-healing wounds. We provide over 3,000 radiation oncology treatments for over 200 new patients annually from a ten county region at The Hope Center.

Thank you for choosing us for your health care needs.



Sincerely,
**Lori Rakes, Chief Executive Office
Piedmont Cartersville**

Phone Directory

Key Numbers

Main: 470.490.1000

Billing inquires: 833.226.2912

Other Hospital Numbers

2nd Floor Nurses Station, 2 Central
470.490.1200

ICU/CCU Waiting Area
470.490.1300

2nd Floor Nurses Station, 2 North
470.490.1230

Information Desk/ Main Lobby
470.490.1010

3rd Floor Nurses Station, 3 North
470.490.1370

Labor & Delivery Waiting Area
470.490.6215

5th Floor Nurses Station, 5 North
470.490.2819

Laboratory
470.490.1825

Administration
470.490.1880

Labor & Delivery Nurses Station
470.490.1260

Cardiac Rehabilitation
470.490.2860

NICU
470.490.3131

Case Management/Social Services
470.490.1925

Patient Experience Coordinator
470.490.1876

Class Registration
piedmont.org
(Search Classes & Events)

PCU Nurses Station
470.490.1340

Day Surgery
470.490.1160

Physician Referral
doctors.piedmont.org

Diabetes Education
470.490.1286

Radiology/Imaging Services
470.490.1950

Emergency Department
470.490.1100

Rehab Services
470.490.2849

Family Care Center
470.490.1280

Surgery Scheduling
470.490.1179

Food & Nutrition
470.490.2770

Surgery Waiting Area
470.490.6909

HIM/Medical Records
470.490.2780

The Hope Center
470.490.2900

Hospitalist Program
470.490.2142

The Women's Center/Breast
Imaging Center
470.490.2941

For more information on the resources available at Piedmont Cartersville, visit piedmont.org/cartersville

Our Commitment to Care

It is our goal is to provide the best quality care to every patient we serve.. We value your feedback, because it enables us to make improvements during your stay and these changes will benefit future patients. Please take time to share your experience with us.

During Your Stay

Please speak with your nurse or nursing supervisor if you have any questions or concerns about your care. We will do our very best to address your concerns and make any necessary changes.

After Your Stay

Once you leave our care, we may ask you to take a patient experience survey. This survey is a tool to measure and report patient satisfaction. It's made up of simple questions on key topics, such as:

- Doctor and nurse communication
- Medicine and discharge information
- Pain management and staff responsiveness
- Overall quality of the hospital

If you're selected to receive this survey, please take the time to complete it. The results will help us know what we're doing right and where we can improve.

If your issue is not resolved, you can file a complaint both with us and with external agencies. Contact our Patient Experience Coordinator at 470.490.1876, or you can reach out to the following resources for further information:

Georgia Department of Community Health:

2 Peachtree St. NW, Suite 31-447,
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
404.657.5700

Office of Quality and Patient Safety

DNV Healthcare USA Inc.

Attn: Hospital Complaints
1400 Ravello Drive
Katy, Texas 77449

Phone: 866.496.9647

Fax: 281.870.4818

Email: hospitalcomplaint@dnv.com

Website:

dnvhealthcareportal.com/patient-complaint-report
(click "Report a Patient Safety Event")

For Patient Rights and Responsibilities, see pages 18–23.

Want to know how we score?

You can review and compare the quality, care and safety ratings for different hospitals at: The Leapfrog Group, which uses Piedmont Cartersville results and other data:

Piedmont.org/quality/hospital-quality-scorecard

The Joint Commission: QualityCheck.org

Access to Services

Language or interpretive services are available to any individual/patient or their designated contact person, at no cost. Please let your nurse or a care team member know if you need assistance.

Language

We can provide you with a translator and/or interpreter for medical services in more than 150 languages, including American Sign Language (ASL).

Hearing

To ensure effective communication with patients and their companions who are deaf or hard of hearing, we provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services free of charge.

Please ask a care team member for assistance, or contact the Corporate Ethics Line at 800.466.0462.

*Our purpose,
our promise*

To make a positive
difference in every
life we touch.



Fast Facts About Your Stay

Café

Location: First floor

Monday through Friday:

Breakfast: 7 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Lunch: 11 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Dinner: 4 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Weekends:

Lunch: 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Before any food or beverages (for guest or patient) are brought into a patient's room, please check with a care team member first. Patients may be on a strict diet and/or may be sensitive to the sight and smell of food.

Wake Up Coffee Shop

Location: First floor main entrance

Monday through Friday:

6:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.

11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

3:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Call ahead number

Ext. *JAVA (5282)

Calling Your Nurse

Your room is equipped with a nurse call system. If you need help, press the bedside call light (red button). A second call light is located in the bathroom for your convenience.

Chaplain Services/Chapel

Pastoral care and spiritual counseling can play an important role for both patients and families during times of illness and injury.

A chaplain can be reached by notifying a care team member. Our chapel is located on the first floor before you reach the cafeteria.

Durable Medical Equipment

You may not bring personally owned, leased or rented medical equipment into the facility. Staff must obtain any medical equipment needed for patient care from a hospital-approved vendor.

Electrical Appliances

Electrical personal grooming equipment such as hairdryers or curling irons are permitted for use in patient rooms. However, the staff must inspect all equipment before plugging it in to be sure they meet fire and safety requirements. Departments and/or nursing units can be more stringent in exercising this policy dependent upon individual patient needs. Under no circumstances will electrical equipment using a heating element, such as heating pads, electric blankets, irons, coffee pots or portable heaters, be permitted for use within the facility.

Photos, Videos and Audio Recordings

For the privacy of our patients and care team, taking photos, videos or audio recordings is prohibited without consent.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Fast Facts About Your Stay (continued)

Gift Shop

The gift shop is located down the hall from the main lobby

Hours:

Monday–Friday: 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Saturday–Sunday: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Housekeeping

Our Environmental Services staff members clean patient rooms daily. If you have any concerns, please share them with a care team member.

Information Desk

The patient information desk is located in the main lobby and is available to provide room numbers, directions and other information.

Internet

We are proud to offer you wireless internet access throughout the hospital. Feel free to take advantage of this service to check your email, and most importantly, to keep up-to-date with your friends and family.

Leaving Your Room

Patients are requested to check with the nursing station before leaving the area. This is to ensure that we know where to locate you, and to ensure that your doctor has given approval.

Mail and Flower Delivery

We will deliver any mail to your room daily. Mail received after you've gone home will be forwarded to the address on your hospital record. Flowers are delivered to your room as they arrive at the hospital. If you are a patient in the Critical Care Unit

(CCU), you may not receive flowers until you are transferred to a non-critical care unit.

Please note: Patients opting out of the facility directory will not receive flowers or mail.

Mail should be addressed as follows for patients:

Patient First and Last Name
Patient Room Number
960 Joe Frank Harris Pkwy.
Cartersville, Georgia 30120

Parking

Visitor parking is located directly in front of the hospital and beside the Emergency Room entrance. We have security personnel on duty 24 hours a day. Please don't leave valuables in your car unattended, and be sure to lock up when you leave the automobile.

Patient Meals/ In-room Dining Service

Check with your nurse to find out about your unit's meal delivery service.

Personal Items

Piedmont Cartersville cannot be responsible for the loss or damage of personal possessions left in your room. Personal items such as eyeglasses, contact lenses, hearing aids, cellphones, electronic devices and dentures are easily misplaced. When you are not using them, you should place them in protective containers.

The best place for your jewelry, cash, credit cards and other valuables is at home. However, if you have brought them with you, please contact your nurse to place your valuables in a secure location. To collect your valuables, contact your nurse at the time of discharge and they will be returned.

Physician Rounds

Please note that physicians make rounds—see patients—every day. However, times may vary.

Quiet Time

We all recognize the importance of a quiet and healing environment.

We strive to balance the practical considerations of cleaning so that it minimizes the disturbance to you. Sometimes, the equipment and technology that we use to treat you do create some undesirable noise. We make every effort to keep the atmosphere around you quiet at night so you can rest as much as possible.

Security

Security guards are on duty 24 hours a day. You may see them patrolling the hospital and parking areas. If you would like escort service to your vehicle, please call the hospital operator by dialing 00.

Vending Areas

Vending machines are located in the ER, Mother/Baby, outpatient and ICU waiting areas.



Your Room

Every effort is made to make sure that everything in your room is in proper working order and that you are comfortable. If you experience any problems with your room or the equipment in it (lights, TV, shower, bed, etc.), please notify your nurse, who will arrange to address the problem.

Tobacco-free Campus

Our campus is tobacco-free. This policy encompasses the building, which has been smoke-free for several years, as well as the rest of the campus, including the parking areas, patios, walkways and green areas.

Tobacco use by patients, visitors, volunteers, employees, vendors and physicians is prohibited on the hospital grounds.

Tobacco use is the number one cause of preventable disease and death in the United States today, with more than 435,000 succumbing to tobacco-related diseases each year. This represents one in five deaths in our country. This has impacted the hospital's decision to go tobacco-free.

The attending physician may order a nicotine patch for patients who routinely smoke, if deemed appropriate.

Save Time by Pre-registering

What you will need to pre-register:

- Your name, address, phone number
- Emergency contact information
- Insurance information

If you'd like a quote for your upcoming procedures, there are three different ways to obtain this information:

- Log on to **piedmont.org/preregister**
- **P:** 855.788.1212
- **E:** price.estimate@piedmont.org

Call Cartersville Pre-registration at 833.260.6168

Monday–Thursday:
9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Friday: 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Saturday: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Pre-registration disclaimer:

After the automated message, there will be a 60-second pause—please stay on the line. Your call will be recorded for monitoring and quality assurance purposes.

Piedmont MyChart

Piedmont MyChart is your one-stop-shop for all your health care needs. It is a patient portal designed to simplify and streamline access to all of your health care information. It's convenient and easy to use. If you do not already have an account, we highly recommend you sign up so you can have easy access to many helpful features.

Go to piedmont.org/patient-tools/mychart to register.

Features:

- Connect with your doctor
- See your test results
- Manage all your appointments
- Request medication refills
- Check in before your appointments



Virtual Nursing Program

We are proud to introduce our Virtual Nursing program, designed to support you and your care team while you are in the hospital. More specifically, virtual nurses will assist with administrative-heavy tasks, such as admissions and discharge, to allow our bedside nurses more time to focus on the hands-on care that only they can provide.

Similar to a Facetime or Zoom call, your virtual nurse sessions are all powered by our in-room TVs. After you are admitted to a hospital room, a care.ai camera linked to the in-room television will connect you and your family with a Piedmont nurse who is trained to be an extension of your care team and assist you throughout your stay.

What will a virtual nurse do for you?

- Guide you through the admissions process
- Gather your background information (i.e., medications, health history, etc.)
- Answer any health-related questions you may have
- Provide patient education and resources
- Guide you through the discharge process

How does it work?

- When a virtual nurse connects to your room, the TV screen will turn gray and the nurse's name will appear on the screen.
- The nurse will introduce themselves and ask your permission to enable a 2-way video connection to perform a virtual visit.
- If you are not ready for a virtual visit, you can let the virtual nurse know, and they will follow up with you at a later time.
- The camera will always return to an OFF setting unless there is a virtual visit in progress.
- No video files are ever recorded or stored, and no pictures are ever taken.

Our virtual nurses will also have the capability to connect to language translation services, or add other parties to sessions when needed, such as family members, friends, or other care team members.

Patient Advisory Council

We invite you to become a member of our Patient Advisory Council. Together we can work to improve our hospital. We value your input.

What is a member of the Patient Advisory Council?

An advisor is someone who:

- Wants to help improve the quality of our hospital's care for all patients and family members
- Gives feedback to the hospital based on their own experiences as a patient or family member
- Helps us plan changes to improve how we take care of patients
- Works with the hospital for either short- or long-term commitments, depending on the project
- Volunteers their time (usually at least 1 hour and not more than 4 hours per month)

Advisors provide a voice that represents patients and families of patients that we serve at Piedmont Cartersville.

They partner with hospital doctors, nurses, and administrators to help improve the quality of our hospital's care for all patients and family members.

What do Patient Advisory Council members do?

- Share your story. Talk about your health care experiences with clinicians, staff, and other patients.
- Participate in discussion groups. Tell us what it's like to be a patient at our hospital and what we can do to improve.
- Review or help create educational or informational materials. Review or create materials like forms, health information handouts, and discharge instructions. Help us make these materials easier for all patients and family members to understand and use.
- Work on short term projects. We sometimes ask advisors to partner with us in making improvements—for example, helping to plan and design a family resource room.
- Serve on a patient and family advisory council. Discuss and plan changes to improve hospital quality and safety.

Who can be an advisor?

You can be an advisor if you or a family member received care at Piedmont Cartersville. You must be 18 years of age or older to be an advisor.

You do not need any special qualifications to be an advisor.

What's most important is your experience as a patient or family member. We will provide you with any other training you need.



Is being an advisor right for you?

Being an advisor may be a good match with your skills and experiences if you can:

- Attend regular meetings (~1-2 hours every other month or quarterly)
- Speak up and share suggestions and potential solutions to help improve hospital care for others
- Talk about both your positive and negative care experiences and share your thoughts on what went well and what could have been done differently
- Work with people who may be different than you
- Listen to and respect the views of others, even when you disagree
- Bring a positive attitude to discussions
- Keep any information you may hear as an advisor private and confidential

To Become a Member:

To get more information about becoming an advisor at Piedmont Carterville, contact Patient Experience at **470.490.1876** or **debra.highfield@piedmont.org**

Strategy 1: Working With Patients and Families as Advisors. Content last reviewed December 2017. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD. <https://www.ahrq.gov/patient-safety/patients-families/engagingfamilies/strategy1/index.html>

This information was created using resources from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD.





Take Charge of Your Care

You are the center of your health care team. It is our hope that these tips will empower you to get the best results from your hospital stay:

Speak up

Ask questions and voice concerns. It's your body, and you have the right to know.

Pay attention

Always double-check that you are getting the right treatments and medicines from the right hospital staff.

Educate yourself

Learn about your medical condition, tests and treatment options so you know why following your care plan is so important.

Find a support person

Pick someone to help speak up for your care and needs during your stay.

Know your meds

Understand what your medicines treat, why you need them and how to take them for the best results.

Check before you go

Make an informed decision when selecting additional health care services. Choose only accredited providers who meet patient safety and quality standards. Go to QualityCheck.org to learn more.

Participate in your care

You are the center of your health care team. Make sure you know what's happening every step of the way—from admission through discharge.



Rights and Responsibilities

All patients have the right to considerate, respectful care at all times and under all circumstances, with recognition of their personal dignity and autonomy. Piedmont will develop, implement and adhere to policies intended to ensure practices that will respect the rights of all patients regardless of race, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, religion, age, disability, diagnosis or sources of payment for care.

Your Rights as a Patient

- A reasonable response to your request and need for care
- Considerate and respectful care
- Receive information and collaboration with your physicians to make decisions
- Be informed of any research or human experimentation affecting your care
- Appropriate assessment and management of pain
- Personal privacy and confidentiality within the law
- Receive care in a safe setting, free from all forms of abuse
- Create Advance Directives and designate a decision maker to exercise these rights
- Information regarding the hospital's patient rights policies, complaint mechanisms and the right to bring a grievance
- Patients and their representatives have the right to request a discharge planning evaluation during their hospitalization

Patient Responsibilities

- Provide accurate and complete information, to the best of your knowledge, regarding present and past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications and other matters relating to your health
- Follow your treatment plan as recommended by the health care provider primarily responsible for your care
- Accept accountability for refusing treatment or not following the health care provider's instructions
- Ensure that financial obligations relating to your health care are fulfilled as promptly as possible
- Follow hospital rules and regulations affecting patient care and conduct
- Safeguard all personal belongings brought with you to Piedmont
- Be considerate and respectful of the rights of other patients, guests, hospital personnel and of hospital property

Responsibility for Personal Belongings

Only personal items such as cosmetics, nightclothes, slippers and a dressing robe should be brought to the hospital upon admission. If you have forgotten any item, such as toothbrush, comb, etc., please speak with your nurse and arrangements will be made to provide it for you.

Plug-in appliances brought from home are not permitted, with the exception of electric shavers, hair dryers, curling irons and battery-operated radios.

Electric fans are specifically prohibited due to infection control concerns.

Do not keep valuables such as jewelry, cash and credit cards at the hospital. If possible, please send them home with a friend or relative. If you need to store valuable items, they may remain in the hospital safe until discharge.

The hospital cannot be held responsible for loss of or damage to personal belongings kept at the bedside.

Your Rights Concerning Decisions and Advance Directives

Adult patients, in most cases, have the right to accept or refuse medical care, including life-sustaining treatment in the event of terminal illness or irreversible coma.

If you want to ensure that your preferences are followed, talk to people close to you about your wishes and document them in a Georgia Advance Directive.

You do not have to be ill or hospitalized in order to create an Advance Directive. In fact, it is only possible to create your Advance Directive when you are "of sound mind."

Piedmont must ask you to document whether you have executed an Advance Directive. We cannot honor your Advance Directive if we are not told about it. Please be assured that you will be cared for and not discriminated against whether or not you have written an Advance Directive.

If you have Advance Directive documents, your primary care physician and this hospital should be provided copies, to be made a part of your medical record. For additional information, or to obtain forms for creating Advance Directives, call the number on the back page for your location.

Your Rights and Responsibilities for Pain Management

Pain and discomfort are personal experiences. Only you can describe how much pain you have and the kind of pain you have.

Because pain relief is an important part of your care, we will:

- Respond to your reports of pain
- Ask you about your pain when we first see you and periodically during the time you receive care from us
- Work with you and your health care providers to set a goal for pain relief
- Help you achieve your goal

We ask that you (or your family member, or other caregiver):

- Tell us when you hurt
- Ask us what to expect
- Help us measure your pain medication
- Tell us about any pain that will not go away
- Tell us if you have any concerns about taking certain medications

Rights and Responsibilities (continued)

Your Right to Visitors

We warmly welcome friends and family, but there is important information—like visiting hours—potential guests should consider when planning to visit. Visiting hours are arranged to give visitors and patients as much time together as possible without interfering with patient care or delaying recovery.

Family, including spouses, significant others and same-sex domestic partners, as well as a minor patient's parents, regardless of the gender of either parent, and clergy may visit any time, observing appropriate restrictions.

All hospitalized patients have the right to have visitors of their choice during their stay, unless visitation interferes with the well-being, rights or safety of others, or is not medically indicated in the patient's care.

We have established the following guidelines for visiting, recognizing the role of family members and visitors in supporting and promoting the well-being of patients, and to assist staff in their efforts to provide care in an environment of dignity, compassion and respect.

We do not restrict, limit, or otherwise deny visitation privileges on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation or disability.

"Family" means any person(s) who plays a significant role in an individual's life. This may include a person(s) not legally related to the individual.

Members of "family" include spouses, domestic partners, partners in civil union and both different-sex and same-sex significant others. "Family" includes a minor patient's parents, regardless of the gender of either parent.

Visitation Rights

Piedmont Cartersville recognizes the importance of family, spouses, partners, friends and other visitors in the care process of patients. We adopt and affirm as policy the following visitation rights of patients/clients who receive services from our facilities:

- To be informed of their visitation rights, including any clinical restriction or limitation of their visitation rights.
- To designate visitors, including, but not limited to, a spouse, a domestic partner (including same-sex), family members and friends. All visitors will enjoy full and equal visitation privileges consistent with any clinically necessary or other reasonable restriction or limitation that facilities may need to place on such rights.
- To receive visits from one's attorney, physician or clergy person at any reasonable time.



- To speak privately with anyone he/she wishes (subject to hospital visiting regulations) unless a doctor does not think it is medically advised.
- To refuse visitors.
- Media representatives and photographers must contact the hospital spokesperson for access to the hospital.

Your Right to General Financial Information: Hospital Admissions

In any urgent or emergent situation, we want to assure you of your right to receive medical screening and stabilizing treatment, regardless of your insurance coverage, deductibles, co-payment or ability to pay.

We also want to ensure that you have an accurate understanding regarding potential costs and your financial obligations related to those costs. Payment is dependent on the provisions of your specific plan. You may be responsible for co-pays and/or deductibles.

Please remember that your health care coverage is a contract between you and your insurance carrier. The hospital will cooperate in expediting your claim; however, you are ultimately responsible for your bill.

The services of your personal physician, emergency department physician, anesthesiologist, pathologist, radiologist and other specialists are not included in your hospital bill. Because these individuals are independent contractors and not employees of the hospital, you will receive a separate statement from them.

If you have any questions or concerns about your bill or your insurance coverage at any point before or during your hospital visit or after discharge, a financial counselor will be happy to help upon request.

Email assistance@piedmont.org if you have questions about your bill, would like to apply for financial assistance or set up a payment plan.

Rights and Responsibilities (continued)

Your Right to Bring Concerns to the Attention of Hospital Management

You have the right to bring a grievance or complaint related to your care. You may do so by talking with your physician, asking to speak with the department manager or contacting a Patient Representative. Please use the number for your hospital, located on the back of the brochure, to be directed to a Patient Representative.

You may contact the Georgia Department of Human Resources' Office of Regulatory Services, Hospital Complaints, even if you have not made a complaint to the hospital first.

Call 404.657.5700

or write to:

Georgia Department of Community Health
Healthcare Facility Regulation Division
2 Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 31-447
Atlanta, GA 30303

Or, you may contact:

Quality Improvement Organizaton (QIO) Beneficiary Compliance

888.317.0751

Online complaint form: <https://qioprogram.org/file-complaint>

Quality Improvement Organizaton - DNV

888.496.9647

Ethics and Compliance Ambassador

470.490.2120

Ethics and Compliance Hotline

800.466.0462

Civil Rights Coordinator

960 Joe Frank Harris Parkway
Cartersville, GA 30120
470.490.2036

TTY: 877.274.9745, Access Code: 1809220

Fax: 470.490.2042



If you need access to services, including a translator and/or interpreter, or to report a concern regarding discrimination in access to services, contact:

Patient Experience Coordinator

Piedmont Cartersville
960 Joe Frank Harris Pkwy SE
Cartersville, Georgia 30120
470.490.1876

You can file a grievance in person or by mail, fax or email. If you need help filing a grievance, our Patient Experience Rep. Coordinator is available to help you.

You also can file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office of Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at:
<https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>

By Mail

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20201
877.696.6775



Notice of Privacy Practices

Each time you visit a hospital, physician, or other health care provider, a record of your visit is made. Typically, this record contains your symptoms, examination and test results, diagnoses, treatment, a plan for future care or treatment, and billing-related information. This notice applies to all of the records of your care generated by the facility, whether made by facility personnel, agents of the facility, or your personal doctor. Your personal doctor may have different policies or notices regarding the doctor's use and disclosure of your health information created in the doctor's office or clinic.

Our Responsibilities

We are required by law to maintain the privacy of your health information, provide you a description of our privacy practices, and to notify you following a breach of unsecured protected health information.

We will abide by the terms of this notice.

Uses and Disclosures

The following categories describe examples of the way we use and disclose health information:

For Treatment

We may use health information about you to provide you treatment or services. We may disclose health information about you to doctors, nurses, technicians, medical students, or other facility personnel who are involved in taking care of you at the facility.

For example, a doctor treating you for a broken leg may need to know if you have diabetes because diabetes may slow the healing process. Different departments of the facility also may share health information about you in order to coordinate the different things you may need, such as prescriptions, lab work, meals, and X-rays. We also may provide your physician or a subsequent health care provider with copies of various reports that should assist him or her in treating you once you're discharged from this facility. We may use and disclose health information about your treatment and services to bill and collect payment from you, your insurance company, or a third party payer. For example, we may need to give your insurance company information about your surgery so they will pay us or reimburse you for the treatment.

We also may tell your health planner about treatment you are going to receive to determine whether your plan will cover it.

For Health Care Operations

Members of the medical staff and/or quality improvement team may use information in your health record to assess the care and outcomes in your case and others like it. The results then will be used to continually improve the quality of care for all patients we serve. For example, we may combine health information about many patients to evaluate the need for new services or treatment. We may disclose information to doctors, nurses, and other students for educational purposes. And we may combine health information we have with that of other facilities to see where we can make improvements. We may remove information that identifies you from this set of health information to protect your privacy.

Fundraising

We may contact you to raise funds for the facility; however, you have the right to elect not to receive such communications.

We also may use and disclose health information:

- To remind you that you have an appointment for medical care;
- To assess your satisfaction with our services;
- To tell you about possible treatment alternatives;
- For population-based activities relating to improving health or reducing health care costs;
- To tell you about health-related benefits or services;
- For conducting training programs or reviewing competence of health care professionals; and
- To a Medicaid eligibility database and the Children's Health Insurance Program eligibility database, as applicable.

When disclosing information, primarily appointment reminders and billing/collections efforts, we may leave messages on your answering machine/voicemail.

Business Associates

There are some services provided in our organization through contracts with business associates. Examples include physician services in the Emergency Department and Radiology, certain laboratory tests, and a copy service we use when making copies of your health record. When these services are contracted, we may disclose your health information to our business associates so that they can perform the job we've asked them to do and bill you or your third-party payer for services rendered. To protect your health information, however, business associates are required by federal law to appropriately safeguard your information.

Notice of Privacy Practices (continued)

Directory

We may include certain limited information about you in the facility directory while you are a patient at the facility. The information may include your name, location in the facility, your general condition (e.g., good, fair), and your religious affiliation. This information may be provided to members of the clergy and, except for religious affiliation, to other people who ask for you by name. If you would like to opt out of being in the facility directory, please request the Opt Out form from the admission staff or facility privacy official.

Individuals Involved in Your Care or Payment For Your Care and/or Notification Purposes

We may release health information about you to a friend or family member who is involved in your medical care or who helps pay for your care, or to notify or assist in the notification of (including identifying or locating) a family member, your personal representative, or another person responsible for your care of your location and general condition. In addition, we may disclose health information about you to an entity assisting in a disaster relief effort in order to assist with the provision of this notice.

Research

The use of health information is important to develop new knowledge and improve medical care. We may use or disclose health information for research studies but only when they meet all federal and state requirements to protect your privacy (such as using only de-identified data whenever possible). You also may be contacted to participate in a research study.

Future Communications

We may communicate to you via newsletters, mail outs or other means regarding treatment options, health-related information, disease-management programs, wellness programs, research projects, or other community-based initiatives or activities our facility is participating in.

Organized Health Care Arrangement

This facility and its medical staff members have organized this document and are presenting it to you as a joint notice. Information will be shared as necessary to carry out treatment, payment, and health care operations. Physicians and caregivers may have access to protected health information in their offices to assist in reviewing past treatment, as it may affect treatment at the time.



Notice of Privacy Practices (continued)

Affiliated, Covered Entity

Protected health information will be made available to facility personnel at local affiliated facilities as necessary to carry out treatment, payment, and health care operations. Caregivers at other facilities may have access to protected health information at their locations to assist in reviewing past treatment information, as it may affect treatment at this time. Please contact the facility privacy official for further information on the specific sites included in this affiliated, covered entity.

Health Information Exchange/Regional Health Information Organization

Federal and state laws may permit us to participate in organizations with other health care providers, insurers, and/or other health care industry participants and their subcontractors in order for these individuals and entities to share your health information with one another to accomplish goals that may include, but not be limited to: improving the accuracy and increasing the availability of your health records; decreasing the time needed to access your information; aggregating and comparing your information for quality improvement purposes; and such other purposes permitted by law.

As required by law, we may disclose information when required to do so by law.

As permitted by law, we also may use and disclose health information for the following types of entities, including, but not limited to:

- Food and Drug Administration
- Public health or legal authorities charged with preventing or controlling disease, injury, or disability
- Correctional institutions
- Workers' compensation agents
- Organ and tissue donation organizations
- Military command authorities
- Health oversight agencies
- Funeral directors and coroners
- National security and intelligence agencies
- Protective services for the president and others
- A person, or persons, able to prevent or lessen a serious threat to health or safety

Law Enforcement

We may disclose health information to a law enforcement official for purposes such as providing limited information to locate a missing person or report a crime.

For Judicial or Administrative Proceedings

We may disclose protected health information as permitted by law in connection with judicial or administrative proceedings, such as in response to a court order, search warrant, or subpoena.

Authorization Required

We must obtain your written authorization in order to use or disclose psychotherapy notes, use or disclose your protected health information for marketing purposes, or to sell your protected health information.

State-specific Requirements

Many states have requirements for reporting, including population-based activities relating to improving health or reducing health care costs. Some states have separate privacy laws that may apply additional legal requirements. If the state privacy laws are more stringent than federal privacy laws, the state law preempts the federal law.

Your Health Information Rights

Although your health record is the physical property of the health care practitioner or facility that compiled it, you have the right to:

Inspect and Copy

You have the right to inspect and obtain a copy of the health information that may be used to make decisions about your care. Usually, this includes medical and billing records, but does not include psychotherapy notes. We may deny your request to inspect and copy in certain, limited circumstances.

If you are denied access to health information, you may request that the denial be reviewed. Another licensed health care professional chosen by the facility will review your request and the denial. The person conducting the review will not be the person who denied your request. We will comply with the outcome of the review.

Amend

If you feel that health information we have about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information.

You have the right to request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by or for the facility. Any request for an amendment must be sent in writing to the facility privacy official. We may deny your request for an amendment, and if this occurs, you will be notified of the reason for the denial.

An Accounting of Disclosures

You have the right to request an accounting of disclosures. This is a list of certain disclosures we make of your health information for purposes other than treatment, payment, or health care operations where an authorization was not required.

Request Restrictions

You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the health information we use or disclose about you for treatment, payment, or health care operations. You also have the right to request a limit on the health information we disclose about you to someone who is involved in your care or the payment for your care, like a family member or friend. For example, you could ask that we not use or disclose information about a surgery you had. Any request for a restriction must be sent in writing to the facility privacy official.

We are required to agree to your request only if 1) except as otherwise required by law, the disclosure is to your health plan and the purpose is related to payment or health care operations (and not treatment purposes), and 2) your information pertains solely to health care services for which you have paid in full. For other requests, we are not required to agree. If we do agree, we will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide you emergency treatment.

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. For example, you may ask that we contact you at work instead of your home. The facility will grant reasonable requests for confidential communications at alternative locations and/or via alternative means only if the request is submitted in writing and the written request includes a mailing address where the individual will receive bills for services rendered by the facility and related correspondence regarding payment for services.

Please realize, we reserve the right to contact you by other means and at other locations if you fail to respond to any communication from us that requires a response. We will notify you in accordance with your original request prior to attempting to contact you by other means or at another location.

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 still are entitled to a paper copy of this notice. If the facility has a website, you may print or view a copy of the notice by clicking on the Notice of Privacy Practices link. To exercise any of your rights, please obtain the required forms from the privacy official and submit your request in writing.



Changes to This Notice

We reserve the right to change this notice, and the revised or changed notice will be effective for information we already have about you, as well as any information we receive in the future. The current notice will be posted in the facility and on our website, and will include the effective date. In addition, each time you register at or are admitted to the facility for treatment or health care services as an inpatient or outpatient, we will offer you a copy of the current notice in effect.

Other Uses of Health Information

Other uses and disclosures of health information not covered by this notice or the laws that apply to us will be made only with your written authorization. If you provide us permission to use or disclose health information about you, you may revoke that authorization, in writing, at any time. If you revoke your authorization, we will no longer use or disclose health information about you for the reasons covered by your written authorization. You understand that we are unable to take back any disclosures we have already made with your authorization, and we are required to retain our records of the care that we provided to you.

Complaints

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with the facility by following the process outlined in the facility's Patient Rights documentation. You also may file a complaint with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. All complaints must be submitted in writing. You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.

Chief Privacy Officer

Contact Piedmont Cartersville's Privacy Officer with any questions or to get a copy of our privacy policies at 470.271.3450.

Advance Directives

One of the most important decisions you can make about your care is to fill out advance directives in case you can no longer speak for yourself. Advance directives are documents that let others know your wishes about the type of care you want. They will only be used if you become unconscious or too ill to communicate yourself.

Different states have different laws about advance directives. Check with our Admissions department or your care team if you have any questions.

Directives can include:

Living Will

This set of instructions explains the type of life-prolonging medical care you wish to accept or refuse. It can include your wishes about the use of resuscitation (CPR) if your heart stops, a ventilator if you stop breathing, or feeding tubes or IVs if you cannot eat or drink.

Durable Power of Attorney

For Health Care

This is a legal document that names your health care proxy—someone who can make medical decisions for you if you're unable to do so. An official health care proxy can represent your wishes on emergency care but also on other medical issues like potential treatment options, blood transfusions, kidney dialysis, etc. Choose someone you trust, discuss your medical wishes and make sure the person agrees to represent you in this role.

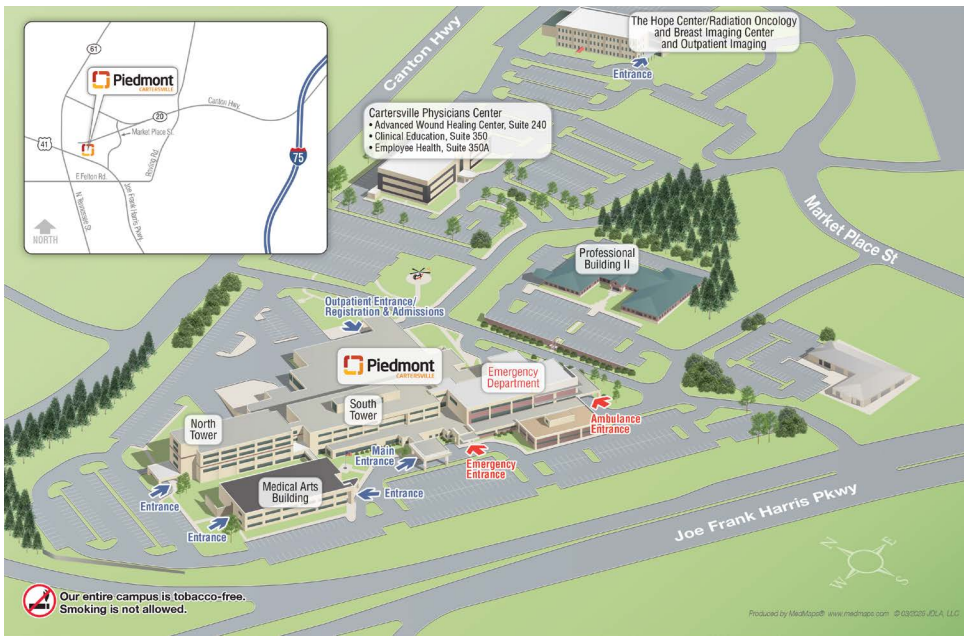
For Finances

You also have the right to appoint someone or the same person to help manage your finances if you cannot.

Fill Out Your Forms

Make sure you submit advance directives each time you go to the hospital so your most current information and wishes are on file. You do not need a lawyer to fill these out.

For more information and to get the forms you need, contact your nurse, case manager or social worker.



Real change lives here

Piedmont Cartersville

470.490.1000

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Cartersville, Georgia 30120

piedmont.org/cartersville