

INDEPENDENT CARE HEALTH PLAN

Department: General and Administration	Policy Name: Privacy Practices Policy
Policy Number: GA-101	Page: 1 of 3
Cross Reference: IT-002 IT Security Policy; IT-011 Personnel On and Off Boarding Technology Policy.	

Policy: Independent Care Health Plan’s (*iCare*’s) policy is to provide a Notice of Privacy Practices (“Notice”) to all members upon enrollment, through the quarterly newsletter, and upon request. The Notice includes all elements and statements that are required by law. The Notice shall inform members of the following.

- The protected health information (PHI) *iCare* collects.
- Impermissible uses of PHI.
- How *iCare* safeguards and protects PHI.
- How *iCare* uses PHI.
- Member’s rights with regards to PHI.
- Changes to *iCare*’s privacy practices.
- How to submit complaints if a member believes their privacy rights have been violated.
- *iCare*’s responsibilities regarding PHI.

The law requires *iCare* to adhere to the terms outlined in the Notice. The Notice can be found on *iCare*’s website here: [Notice of Privacy Practices](#)

In addition, this policy governs how *iCare* manages access to and use of race/ethnicity, language, gender identity and sexual orientation data.

Independent Care collects individual-level data on race/ethnicity, language, gender identity and sexual orientation. *iCare* does not use data on race/ethnicity, language, gender identity and sexual orientation information for underwriting and for the denial of services, coverage and benefits.

Safeguarding Protected Health Information (PHI) and Data on Race/Ethnicity, Language, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation:

This policy outlines how *iCare* stores, disposes, uses, reuses and protects paper (including, but not limited to patient charts, sign-in sheets) and electronic systems and devices (including, but not limited to diskettes, CDs, tapes, mobile applications, portable drives, laptops, and secure portals) that contain PHI and data on race/ethnicity, language, gender identity and sexual orientation from unauthorized access. *iCare*’s privacy protection policy requires the following:

- Each user must have a unique ID and password to access any system.
- Allow staff minimum necessary access to protected health information in paper and electronic systems and devices.

Effective Date: 8/9/2023	Responsible Department: General Operations
Revision Number: 1	Last Review Date: 09/2025
Sourced From: PHI-101	Version Sourced From: 1
Last Revision Date: 10/2024	Next Review Date: 9/30/2026
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- Staff is trained on the proper use of their computers in a remote working environment and are required to follow all prudent security practices to safeguard access to PHI and data on race/ethnicity, language, gender identity and sexual orientation by unauthorized parties.
- Staff user accounts are disabled upon termination from iCare, so users are unable to retain access after their termination date.
- Availability of secured shredding bins throughout the facility for the disposal of any paper documents containing PHI and data on race/ethnicity, language, gender identity and sexual orientation.
- Physical access to the office areas where workstations are used is secured by electronic access control cards. Control cards are issued to staff members on the first date of employment and are terminated on the same date that employment ends.
- All server equipment is in a central data room and secured by a pass card control system.
- All the removable media is encrypted using commercial encryption software.
- Keep an inventory of all company devices.
- Upon return, removable media devices are cleared prior to being reissued to another staff member.
- Hard drives that are no longer used are destroyed by a third-party vendor, in accordance with United States Department of Defense 5220.22-M standard. A certificate of destruction is received from this vendor upon completion.

How iCare May Use or Share Member Data on Race/Ethnicity, Language, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation:

Following are the ways in which iCare uses or shares member data on race/ethnicity, language, gender identity and sexual orientation:

- The data is used to identify disparities in health outcomes among population groups and to design programs to close the gaps on those disparities.
- Data is used to develop health related educational materials tailored for specific at-risk populations.
- Aggregate data is used for provider education purposes to promote culturally appropriate and respectful health care.
- Prior authorization letters to providers includes information on a member’s preferred language.

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- The Network Development Department compares aggregate provider and member language data to assess the linguistic needs of our membership and monitor how effectively the network meets the needs and preferences of our membership.

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Responsible Department: General Operations

Responsible Party: Chief Operating Officer

Reviewing Department(s): General Operations

References: 45 CFR 164.520; NCQA

Recommended Distribution: All staff via Independent Care's SharePoint Site

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