

FULTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Fulton County Public Health

Information for Fulton County Residents

2714 State Highway 29
PO Box 415
Johnstown, NY 12095

(518) 736-5720
(518) 762-1382 fax

About Fulton County Public Health

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The Fulton County Public Health Department, under the direction of the Fulton County Board of Supervisors and the New York State Department of Health, seeks to promote wellness, to protect from disease, to prevent injury/disability, to prepare for emerging illness/disease and to assist Fulton County residents in attaining and maintaining optimal health. Each person and/or their family will be educated in accessing health care and will be empowered to be responsible for the decisions regarding their health care needs. All services provided by Fulton County Public Health will be in response to needs identified in the Community Health Needs Assessment contingent upon the department's human and financial resources as well as local, state, and federal rules, regulations, and laws. Care will be provided in a comprehensive, coordinated, and collaborative manner with other community agencies and health care providers.

OUR MISSION

The Fulton County Public Health Department will provide primary, secondary, and tertiary preventive levels of public health services to Fulton County residents through the provision of the 10 essential Public Health services.

- Monitor health status to identify and solve community health problems.
- Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community.
- Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues.
- Mobilize community partnerships into action to identify and solve health problems.
- Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts.
- Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.
- Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.
- Assure a competent public health and personal health care workforce.
- Evaluate the effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.
- Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

For more information, Please call 518-736-5720

We Care About our Residents!

Fulton County Public Health is located in the County Services Complex at 2714 State Highway 29 in Johnstown. We offer many services to the residents of Fulton County both at our office and in the home. Our regular office hours are from 8AM to 4PM Monday – Friday. We also offer some evening clinics. Many services offered by FCPH are provided free of charge; others have eligibility criteria and sliding fee scales are available for the uninsured. For appointments call 518-736-5720 and follow the menu. For medically related questions, ask for or choose “nurse on duty”.

After-Hours Contact Information

If you are in acute distress or your medical condition has changed, contact your doctor and/or proceed to the emergency room as soon as possible. Dial 911 for an ambulance.

If you need to speak to a nurse and have called the office after it is closed, your call will be forwarded to the Fulton County Sheriff’s Department at 518-736-2100. Once the call is transferred please ask for the “On Call Public Health Nurse”. The Sheriff’s Department will contact the On Call nurse and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Maternal/Child Family Health Services

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

First time moms and high-risk moms residing in Fulton County are offered a one-time phone session with a nurse to provide postpartum and newborn care health education and health guidance. Offered are available resources and instructions on newborn care, feeding (including breastfeeding support), infant growth and development.



FAMILY PLANNING

Family planning and resource information is available to anyone by calling or stopping by the office.

WIC

WIC is a federally funded program to provide nutrition education and supplemental foods for **W**omen, **I**nfants and **C**hildren at nutritional risk. For information on WIC call 518-853-8363 or 518-725-2310. Public Health and WIC program staffs collaborate to share health and community resource information to women of childbearing years.



HEALTH EDUCATION

Fulton County Public Health staff are available to set up educational displays, present to groups, and can provide information on a variety of health topics. Public Health staff attends health-fairs, tabling events and help employers to plan wellness events. Please call 518-736-5720 with any interests.

LEAD PROGRAM

Lead poisoning is a danger for every baby and child. Lead paint was commonly used in houses built before 1978. Children living in these homes are, therefore, at a higher risk. Cracking, peeling paint chips and dust from opening and closing windows are the most common exposure sources. Elevated lead levels can result in developmental delays or brain damage if not treated. Fulton County Public Health provides lead testing by appointment at our office for those children with no insurance. Charges are based on a sliding fee scale. The majority of our children receives a prescription from their family physician and has testing done at a local hospital laboratory. Tests are available to children aged 6 months to 18 years and results are sent to Fulton County Public Health for follow-up and risk reduction education.



Injury Control

SAFE HAVEN

In 2001, Nathan Littauer, Fulton County Social Services, the District Attorney's Office and Fulton County Public Health met to establish Safe Haven. **Safe Havens are locations for babies whose parents wish to abandon them and where the infant can immediately receive care.** The intent of the program is to prevent the unnecessary death of an infant born to an unwilling parent. **The Sheriff's Department 911 vestibule and Nathan Littauer Hospital Emergency Room are designated as Safe Haven locations.**

CAR SEAT PROGRAM

Fulton County Public Health (FCPH) operates a car seat fitting station and low-income car seat program. Parents/guardians needing instructions on car seat installation and the proper fitting for the child into their car seat may do so by making an appointment at the FCPH fitting station by calling 518-736-5720. During this appointment, the



Child Passenger Safety Technician (CPST) will provide education about utilizing car seats and booster seats. The CPST will demonstrate properly installing a child's car seat into the vehicle driven to the appointment and then will demonstrate properly fitting the child into the car seat. After the training, the parent/guardian will be observed repeating the installation and fitting. Low-income families, who are in need of a car seat or booster seat, may qualify for a free seat. Families in need should call FCPH at 518-736-5720 to see if they qualify.

GENERAL SAFETY INFORMATION

Other safety information is also available on topics such as trampolines, air bags, baby walkers and much more. An environmental safety sheet is available to assess fire safety and general home safety. These age-appropriate forms enable Fulton County Public Health to provide resources to meet individual safety needs.

Children with Special Needs

CHILD FIND PROGRAM

The Child Find Program was developed to identify at-risk children at an early age for physical and developmental disabilities in order to provide services as soon as possible through the Early Intervention Program. The main goal of the program is to assure all children have health insurance and a physician to provide well child care including developmental assessments. Families are provided with information on typically developing peers and given activities on what they can do to work with their child.



EARLY INTERVENTION (EI)

The Early Intervention Program provides therapy and special education services to children ages birth to 3 with qualifying developmental delays and/or diagnosed disabilities. Services include things such as speech therapy, special instruction, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. Anyone can make a referral to the EI Program with parent agreement. EI is a voluntary program. Service Coordinators provide case management. An evaluation team comprised of at least two professionals, one who evaluates overall development and one specializing in the child's area of delay, assess the child in their natural environment.

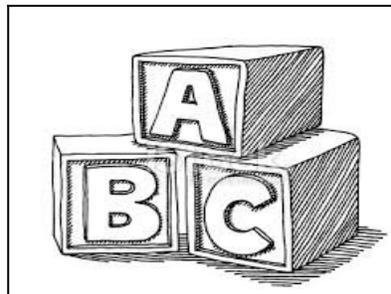
If the child is determined eligible, an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) is developed with the parents within 45 days from the date of referral to discuss EI services that might help the child reach his or her developmental goals. Meetings are held every six months to review these goals and/or revise the plan. The EI Program also provides individual therapy services to the child and parent teaching in their natural environment. Individual therapists and provider agencies are approved by the State of New York State Department of Health Bureau of Early Intervention. Local Early Intervention Council Committee (LEICC) meetings are held 2 times per year to discuss issues in Early Intervention. Parental input is most essential to this program.

PRESCHOOL EDUCATION 3-5

At age 3, children who are receiving Early Intervention Services may be transitioned to the Preschool 3-5 Program. This program is mandated by New York State Department of Education and administered through the school district. An annual Committee on Preschool Education (CPSE) meeting is held for each child who qualifies at the home school district and an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed to guide the child's education during the school year.

Parents that are concerned with their child's development between 3-5 can refer their child to their local school district CPSE. Parents are the only referral source for this program.

A meeting may be held in the interim as the child's needs indicate. For a child that qualifies for the program, discussion on where services will take place, with consideration of least restrictive environment, will occur at the initial CPSE meeting. The services generally follow a school calendar, however, a six-week summer program is available for severely delayed children to prevent substantial regression of their skills. Fulton County Public Health administers payment to therapists who provide services in the child's home or daycare, to center-based schools, and to bus companies. Call your local school district for more information.



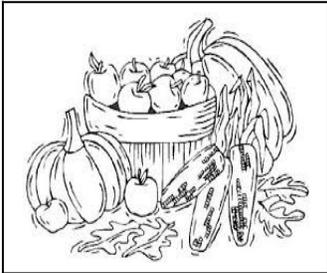
CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS (CYSHCN)

The Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program seeks to improve the system of care for children and youth with special health care needs from birth to 21 years of age and their families. Children served by the CYSHCN Program have an illness or condition for which they need extra health care and support services. These children might have a serious or long-lasting physical condition, intellectual or developmental disability; and/or behavioral or emotional condition. This program is strictly a referral program. Services include information about health insurance, community resources, specialists and accessing health care providers. We also work with families to help them meet the medical and non-medical needs of their children.



Public Health Programs

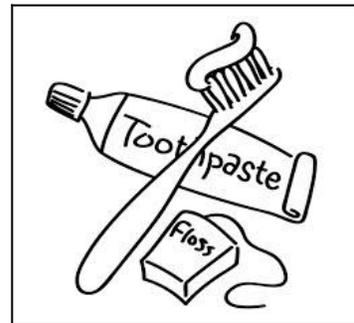
NUTRITION



Nutritional information is available to essentially well residents of the county who are seeking information on improving their health through dietary management. Assistance in locating a dietician or nutritionist for nutritional counseling is available upon request.

PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Upon request, information or an educational program about an emerging health concern, services we provide, community health and statistics, or specific topics regarding health will be provided to community groups. Information on many health-related topics are available to borrow or view in our office. Flyers, textbooks, health risk and prevention messages to children, health facts and other resources are also available. Dental health presentations are available for schools and organizations who serve children up to age 21.



Communicable Disease

Persons reported as having a communicable disease will receive information, education and contact investigation as required by New York State Department of Health regulations. Information obtained through communicable disease investigation is completely confidential and helps to protect the health of the ill individual and of the entire community.

IMMUNIZATION

Routine childhood immunizations are available for children who reside in the County and are uninsured, have Medicaid or Child Health Plus insurance or meet other qualifying criteria. Adult (Age 19 and over)

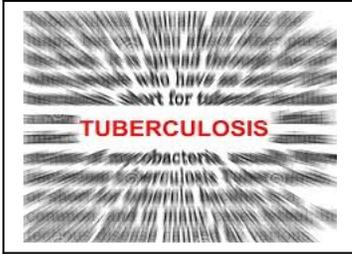


County

immunizations are provided for Fulton County residents on an individual needs basis for a small or at-cost fee. Appointments may be made for regular office clinic hours. Call 518-736-5720 for more information.

TUBERCULOSIS

Persons found to be infected with TB will be followed by Public Health nurses and seen by a nurse practitioner or physician in our clinic setting. Public Health Law mandates Public Health nurses to conduct follow-up reports of TB infected persons and their contacts, even if those persons wish private care. Call for more information.



CONFIDENTIAL HIV TESTING

Confidential HIV testing is available at our office at NO cost. We now offer the HIV rapid test by oral fluid or finger stick. Call (518) 736-5720 for an appointment.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE DIAGNOSIS, TREATMENT and ANONYMOUS HIV TESTING

STD diagnosis and treatment is provided through a contract with Mohawk Hudson Planned Parenthood in Johnstown. Services offered under this contract are fully covered if not covered by your insurance. Appointments are preferred but are not necessary, hours are 8:30AM to 5:00PM Monday and 11:00AM to 5:00PM Wednesday. Please call for an appointment if able 518-736-1911.

RABIES

Fulton County Public Health is responsible for Rabies prevention and treatment for Fulton County residents. Pet immunization clinics are held periodically throughout the year. A nominal donation is appreciated. Clinic dates are advertised in local newspapers, on Facebook and posted in town halls. Clinic pre-registration is available by calling 518-736-5720 three weeks prior to each clinic.

Pre-exposure treatment is offered for people at-risk for a fee. On-call coverage for rabies exposure is available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week. During office hours, call Fulton County Public Health at 518-736-5720; after hours call Fulton County Sheriff's Department at 518-736-2100 and request the Public Health Nurse on-call.





EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



The events of September 11, 2001 placed terrorism in the forefront of all Emergency Preparedness planning. As a result, emergency planning is here to stay as a part of the Public Health system. Through federal grant funding, Fulton County Public Health has formulated and will continue to develop the Public Health Emergency Response Plan. Emergency Planning has greatly impacted the total operation of Public Health and challenges every employee at some level. Emergency planning and testing the plans with drills and exercises will continue to be a function of Public Health as we strive to be aware and prepared to protect the health of all Fulton County residents!

Fulton County Public Health has developed an Emergency Preparedness folder with Emergency contact numbers and information on how to create your family emergency plan and kit. The folder is available to all Fulton County residents at the Fulton County Public Health office.

ARE YOU READY?

- Do you have a **personal and family disaster plan**?
 - Do you have a **first aid kit, food, water, bedding and tools** for 1 week?
 - Have you thought about **alternate energy/heat** sources?
 - What about **Special Needs**- Oxygen, Medications, Infants?
 - Do you know where the **Shelters** are in your area?
 - Do you have a plan for **PETS?.....CAR KIT?**



DO YOU HAVE A **CAR SAFETY KIT** AND A **SURVIVAL KIT** FOR EACH VEHICLE?

- Flashlight, Radio- Extra Batteries
- Booster Cable, Fire Extinguisher, Flares
- Tire Repair Kit, Pump, Shovel
- First Aid Kit and Manual
- Blankets, Bottled water and non-perishable high energy foods
such as (granola bars, raisins, peanut butter)
- Maps

Chronic Disease

Fulton County Public Health is an active member of coalitions, partnerships, committees and task forces, pertaining to chronic disease. Chronic disease educational material such as information on diabetes, and/or heart disease is available at our office.

ADVANCING TOBACCO FREE COMMUNITIES (ATFC)

This coalition consists of Fulton, Montgomery and Hamilton Counties, Catholic Charities of Fulton and Montgomery counties, St. Mary's Healthcare and other community members. The ATFC grant works to support and promote tobacco-free environments anywhere residents live, work, and play. This program combines with Reality Check (youth) and Community Engagement components. For more information contact ATFC staff at 518-762-8313, ext. 3173.



CANCER SERVICES PROGRAM OF FULTON , MONTGOMERY and SCHENECTADY COUNTIES

Fulton, Montgomery and Schenectady Counties Cancer Screening Services Program provides free screenings for men and women who are uninsured or underinsured. Breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screenings are offered. All information is confidential. Breast cancer screenings are for women 40 years or older and those who have a family history of breast cancer. Cervical cancer screenings are for women 18 years or older and for women who become sexually active. Colorectal cancer screenings are for men and women 50 years or older, and those who have a family history of colorectal cancer. For more information, contact the Program Coordinator at 518-770-6814.



FULTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH PATIENT'S BILL OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As a patient, parent, legal guardian of a child receiving home services, or at a clinic operated by the Fulton County Public Health Department, you have the right, consistent with law to understand and use the following rights. If you do not understand or need help, you have the right to assistance, including interpretive services. These rights include New York State Department of Health's Patients' Bill of Rights for Diagnostic & Treatment Centers (Clinics) as well as those of Fulton County Public Health in addition to Responsibilities.

- (1) Receive service(s) without regard to age, race, color, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, sex, gender identity, national origin or sponsor;
 - (2) Be treated with consideration, respect and dignity including privacy in treatment;
 - (3) Be informed of the services available at the center;
 - (4) Be informed of the provisions for off-hour emergency coverage;
 - (5) Be informed of and receive an estimate of the charges for services, view a list of the health plans and the hospitals that the center participates with; eligibility for third-party reimbursements and, when applicable, the availability of free or reduced cost care;
 - (6) Receive an itemized copy of his/her account statement, upon request;
 - (7) Obtain from his/her health care practitioner, or the health care practitioner's delegate, complete and current information concerning his/her diagnosis, treatment and prognosis in terms the patient can be reasonably expected to understand;
 - (8) Receive from his/her physician information necessary to give informed consent prior to the start of any nonemergency procedure or treatment or both. An informed consent shall include, as a minimum, the provision of information concerning the specific procedure or treatment or both, the reasonably foreseeable risks involved, and alternatives for care or treatment, if any, as a reasonable medical practitioner under similar circumstances would disclose in a manner permitting the patient to make a knowledgeable decision;
 - (9) Refuse treatment to the extent permitted by law and to be fully informed of the medical consequences of his/her action;
 - (10) Refuse to participate in experimental research;
 - (11) Voice grievances and recommend changes in policies and services to the center's staff, the operator and the New York State Department of Health without fear of reprisal;
 - (12) Express complaints about the care and services provided and to have the center investigate such complaints. The center is responsible for providing the patient or his/her designee with a written response within 30 days if requested by the patient indicating the findings of the investigation. The center is also responsible for notifying the patient or his/her designee that if the patient is not satisfied by the center response, the patient may complain to the New York State Department of Health;
 - (13) Privacy and confidentiality of all information and records pertaining to the patient's treatment;
 - (14) Approve or refuse the release or disclosure of the contents of his/her medical record to any health-care practitioner and/or health-care facility except as required by law or third-party payment contract;
 - (15) Access to his/her medical record per Section 18 of the Public Health Law, and Subpart 50-3. For additional information link to: http://www.health.ny.gov/publications/1449/section_1.htm#access;
 - (16) Authorize those family members and other adults who will be given priority to visit consistent with your ability to receive visitors;
 - (17) When applicable, make known your wishes in regard to anatomical gifts. Persons sixteen years of age or older may document their consent to donate their organs, eyes and/or tissues, upon their death, by enrolling in the NYS Donate Life Registry or by documenting their authorization for organ and/or tissue donation in writing in a number of ways (such as health care proxy, will, donor card, or other signed paper). The health care proxy is available from the center;
 - (18) View a list of the health plans and the hospitals that the center participates with; and
 - (19) Receive an estimate of the amount that you will be billed after services are rendered.
1. **THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:** provide information regarding your health status, medical history, and medicine being taken;
 2. **THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:** notify your private physician and Public Health Staff of any changes in your health condition;
 3. **THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:** follow the advice and instructions given to you by Public Health Staff;

4. **THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:** ask questions of the Public Health Staff to fully understand care given to you;
5. **THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:** keep appointments and to notify Public Health of any inability to do so;
6. **THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:** cooperate with Public Health Staff of all races, color, sex, religion, age, nationalities, marital status, sexual orientation, and ethnic origin.

FULTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH (FCPH) HIPAA NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES
Federal Health Information Portability and Accountability Act of 1996

This notice describes how medical information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information.

We will obtain your written authorization before using your health information or sharing it with others outside the county. However, there are some situations when we do not need your written authorization before using your health information or sharing it with others.

By signing the Patient Information Sheet, you are also acknowledging that you have received this notice

How we may use and disclose your health information without written authorization

For Treatment - FCPH may use medical information to provide patients with medical treatment or services.

Departments may disclose medical information to doctors, nurses, technicians, medical students, or other personnel who are involved in taking care of patients. For example, a doctor treating an injury may need to know if there are any diseases that would require a special diet so as not to slow the healing process. Different Departments of the County also may share medical information in order to coordinate the different things needed, such as prescriptions, lab work and x-rays. The County may need to disclose medical information to people outside the County Departments who may be involved in medical care after a patient leaves; such as family members, clergy or others used to provide medical services.

For Payment –FCPH may use and disclose medical information so that the treatment and services may be billed to and payment may be collected from the patient, an insurance company or a third party. For example, we may need to give health plan information on treatment, so a health plan will approve treatment for payment or reimbursement.

For Health Care Operations –FCPH may use and disclose medical information for operations. These uses and disclosures are necessary to our Department and make sure that our patients receive quality care. For example, we may use medical information to review treatment and services and to evaluate the performance of staff. FCPH may combine medical information to decide what additional services should be offered, what services are not needed, and whether certain treatments are effective. We may disclose information to doctors, nurses, technicians, and medical students, nursing students and other personnel for review and learning purposes.

Appointment Reminders – FCPH may use and disclose medical information for reminders that there is an appointment for treatment or medical care.

Treatment Alternatives – FCPH may use and disclose medical information to recommend possible treatment options or alternatives.

Health Related Benefits and Services - FCPH may use and disclose medical information to recommend health related benefits or services.

Fundraising Activities – FCPH may use medical information in an effort to raise money for operations.

County Department Directories – Departments within the County do include certain limited information about patients while in their services. This information may include name, location, and religious affiliation, within a specific Department. The directory information, except for religious affiliation, may be released to people who ask for a person by name.

Individuals Involved in Care or Payment for Care - If you do not object, FCPH may release medical information to a friend or family member who is involved with medical care. Medical information may be given to someone who helps pay for care. FCPH may also tell family or friends the condition of a patient.

Exception in Emergencies or Public need -FCPH may disclose medical information in an emergency or for an important public need. We may disclose your information if you need emergency treatment, or if we are required by law to treat you, but are unable to obtain your consent. We also may disclose your information to an entity assisting in a disaster relief effort so that family can be notified about conditions, status and location.

Communication Barriers- FCPH may use or disclose your protected health information if we are unable to obtain your consent because of substantial communication barriers, and we believe you would want us to treat you if we could communicate with you.

Research – Under certain circumstances, medical information use and disclosure may be done for research purposes. For example, a Department of Health research project may involve comparing diagnosis of patients. Research projects are subject to a special approval process and permission.

As Required By Law – FCPH will disclose medical information when required to do so by Federal, State or Local law.

To Avert a Serious Threat to Health or Safety – The County may use and disclose medical information when necessary to prevent a serious threat to health, to the public or another person. Any disclosure would be to someone able to help prevent the threat.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Organ and Tissue Donation – FCPH may release medical information to organizations that handle organ procurement or organ, eye or tissue transplantation of an organ to donation bank.

Military and Veterans – FCPH may release medical information of members as required by military command authorities or to various veterans departments to determine if you are eligible for certain benefits.

Workers' Compensation – FCPH may release medical information for workers' compensation or similar programs. These programs provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness.

Public Health Risks – FCPH may disclose medical information for public health activities. These activities generally include the following:

- to prevent or control disease, injury or disability;
- to report births and deaths;
- to report child/adult abuse or neglect;
- to report reactions to medications or problems with products;
- to notify people of recalls of products;
- to notify a person who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk for contracting or spreading a disease or condition;
- to notify the appropriate government authority if believed that someone has been the victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence.

Health Oversight Activities – FCPH may disclose medical information to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. These oversight activities include, for example, audits, investigations, inspections and licensure. These activities are necessary for the government to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws.

Lawsuits and Disputes – FCPH may disclose medical information in response to a court or administrative order. Someone else involved in the dispute may release medical information in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process.

Law Enforcement – FCPH may release medical information if asked to do so by law enforcement official:

- in response to a court order, subpoena, warrant, summons or similar process;
- to identify or locate a suspect, fugitive, material witness, or missing person;
- about the victim of a crime if, under certain limited circumstances, the County is unable to obtain the person's agreement;
- about a death believed may be the result of a criminal conduct;
- about criminal conduct at any Department of the County;

- in emergency circumstances to report a crime; the location of the crime or victims; or the identity, description or location of a person who committed the crime.

Coroners, Medical Examiners and Funeral Directors – FCPH may release medical information to a coroner or medical examiner. This may be necessary to identify a deceased person or determine the cause of death. Medical information may be released to funeral directors as necessary to carry out their duties.

National Security Intelligence Activities – FCPH may release medical information to authorized federal officials for intelligence, counterintelligence, and other nation security activities authorized by the law.

Inmates – FCPH may release medical information to correctional institutions or law enforcement officials. This release would be necessary for the institution to provide its inmates with health care, to protect their health and safety and the health and safety of others and for the safety and security of the correctional institution.

RIGHTS REGARDING MEDICAL INFORMATION

Fulton County Public Health will abide by the following rights regarding medical information maintained in its department.

Right to Inspect and Copy – FCPH will allow patients to inspect and copy medical information that may be used to make decisions about care. Usually, this includes medical and billing records, but does not include psychotherapy notes. To inspect and copy medical information that may be used to make decisions, a request in writing needs to be submitted to the department that has control of the information requested. If a copy of the information is requested, the department may charge a fee for the cost of copying, mailing or other supplies associated with the request.

Right to Amend – A patient may request a department to amend medical information if it is felt incorrect or incomplete. To request an amendment, the request must be made in writing and submitted to the department maintaining those records. In addition, the patient must provide a reason that supports the request. The FCPH may deny the request if the department did not create the information, is not part of the medical information kept, or is accurate and complete.

Right to an Accounting of Disclosure – FCPH has the obligation to provide a list of disclosures made of medical information. To request a list or accounting of disclosures, a request, in writing, to the department maintaining those records must be submitted. The request must state a time period, which may not be longer than six years and may not include information dated before April 1, 2003. FCPH may charge for the costs of providing the list.

Right to Request Restrictions – FCPH must allow patients to request a restriction or limitation on the medical information used or disclosed about treatment, payment or health care operations. FCPH will abide by requests to limit medical information to someone who is involved in care or payment, like a family member or friend. For example, not disclosing information about surgery. FCPH will comply with reasonable requests. To request restrictions, a request in writing to the department maintaining those records should be made. The request must tell what information is to be limited, and if the limit is use, disclosure or both and to whom.

Right to Request Confidential Communications – FCPH will abide by reasonable requests to communicate about medical matters in certain ways or at a certain location. For example, a request that communication only be done by mail will be honored. The County will not ask why and will accommodate all reasonable requests.

Rights to a Paper Copy of This Notice of Privacy Practices – FCPH will provide a paper copy of this notice of privacy practices no later than the first encounter after April 14, 2003. This paper notice will be provided either in person or by mail.

CHANGES TO THIS NOTICE Fulton County Public Health and the County of Fulton reserve the right to change this notice. The County reserves the right to make the revised or changed notice effective for medical information we presently have, or any information received in the future. We will post a copy of the current notice in the County Building and on our website. The notice will contain the effective date.

COMPLAINTS

The County will accept any complaint if it is felt that privacy rights have been violated. Complaints may also be filed with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. To file a complaint with the County, residents and patients will contact Jon Stead, the Chief Privacy Officer for Fulton County. All complaints must be submitted in writing. No penalty will be imposed for filing a complaint.

OTHER USES OF MEDICAL INFORMATION Other uses and disclosures of medical information not covered by the notice or the laws that apply to Fulton County Public Health will be made only with permission. Permission may be revoked at any time. Any disclosures already made with permission cannot be taken back. Lastly, records of the care provided by the county are required to be retained within each Department that provides the services.

PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY Procedures for safeguarding health/confidential information maintained by Fulton County:

- (a) Records containing individually identifiable protected health information shall be marked and kept in locked files or in rooms that are locked when the records are not in use.
- (b) When in use, records shall be maintained in such a manner as to prevent exposure of protected health information to anyone other than the authorized party directly utilizing the case record.
- (c) No records shall be taken home by agency staff except upon prior authorization by appropriate supervisory staff in order to perform a function, which requires the possession of the records outside of the department and where return of the records to the department at the close of business would result in an undue burden to staff. In those cases where records are taken home by staff, the records are to be maintained in a secure location and are not to be disclosed to anyone other than those expressly authorized by statute or regulation. The records are to be returned to the department by staff on the following business day.
- (d) Records shall be transmitted from one location to another in sealed envelopes stamped "confidential".
- (e) Interviews with patients shall be conducted at a location and in a manner, which maximized privacy. Employees of Fulton County Public Health or the other authorized agencies, consistent with applicable statute and regulation, shall have access to individual Protected Health Information only where the employee's specific job responsibilities cannot be accomplished without access to Protected Health information.

REVISED 10/19