



## Northwestern Medical Center

### Patient Portal Use Terms and Conditions

The Northwestern Medical Center (“NMC”) Patient Portal (the “Patient Portal”) offers secure viewing and communication as a service to patients who wish to view parts of their records and communicate with our staff. The following Patient Portal Use Terms and Conditions (the “Terms and Conditions”) set forth the conditions for use of the Patient Portal. By using the Patient Portal, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the Terms and Conditions and that you consent to the terms and practices set forth herein. Please note that the Terms and Conditions may be amended and updated from time to time. Your continued use of the Patient Portal is deemed to be an acceptance of those changes, so please check the policy periodically for updates. If you do not agree with the Terms and Conditions, your choice is to not use the Patient Portal.

#### **Availability of the Patient Portal**

Access to this secure Patient Portal is an optional service, and may be suspended or terminated at any time and for any reason. If service is suspended or terminated, NMC will notify you as promptly as we reasonably can.

You have no obligation to enroll in the Patient Portal and enrollment, or not enrolling, will not affect the quality or availability of your treatment.

**DO NOT use the Patient Portal to communicate (i) an emergency, (ii) an urgent issue or (iii) sensitive information (e.g. mental health information, substance abuse issues, work excuses, worker’s compensation information, other legal matters).**

#### **Proper Subject Matter**

- Use the Patient Portal for non-urgent medical portal related questions, lab results, select reports, view scheduled appointments or requests.
- Use the Patient Portal to request an update to your demographic information.
- Be sure that all information that you enter is true, accurate, complete, and specific. It is important to update your information whenever there is a change.

When using the Patient Portal, you agree to conduct yourself in a manner consistent with all applicable laws and regulations. You agree that you shall not: (a) interfere or disrupt (or attempt to interfere with or disrupt) the Patient Portal or servers or networks connected with the Patient Portal; (b) transmit any file which contains viruses or Trojans or any other contaminating or destructive feature, or; (c) provide any information that is false or misleading or that you do not have the right to disclose.

#### **Communications May Become a Part of Medical Record**

**Communications via the Patient Portal may be included in your permanent medical record.** Your Patient Portal account is not, however, your complete medical record.

## **Privacy**

- All email address lists will be kept confidential and such lists will not be shared with other parties, unless necessary to carry out Patient Portal operations (e.g. perform system upgrades to the Portal) or required by law.
- For information on how private health information is handled in our facility, view NMC's Privacy Practices at <https://www.northwesternmedicalcenter.org/privacy-policy>.
- If you have any concerns, please contact the Health Information Management at 802-524-1060.

## **Response Time**

- Reasonable efforts will be made to respond to email inquiries within one (1) business day, but in most cases, no later than three (3) business days after receipt. Response time may be longer if the Patient Portal service is interrupted for maintenance, upgrades, or emergency repairs related to events beyond our control. In this respect, you agree not to hold NMC, its physician practices, physicians, providers or any of its staff, in any way liable or responsible to you for such modification, suspension, or disruption of the Patient Portal.

## **Medical Advice and Information Disclaimer**

The Patient Portal may from time to time include information posted by NMC in the form of news, opinions, or general educational materials that should not be construed as specific medical advice or instruction from NMC. Information within the Patient Portal is not intended to be used for emergencies, medical diagnosis or treatment nor is the Patient Portal intended to take the place of in-person visits with your physician. The information posted by NMC on the Patient Portal should not be considered complete, nor should it be relied on to suggest a course of treatment for a particular individual. You should always seek the advice of your physician with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition and you should never disregard medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you may have read on the Patient Portal.

## **Protecting Your Private Health Information and Risks**

Keeping your Patient Portal information and messages secure depends on your cooperation in two ways:

1. the secure message must reach the correct email address, and
2. the authorized individual must be able to get access to it.

Only you can make sure these two factors are present. We need you to make sure that we have your correct email address and are informed if it ever changes. You also need to keep track of who has access to your Patient Portal account, so that only you or someone you have authorized can see messages received or other information in your Patient Portal. You should protect your Patient Portal login information from anyone whom you do not want to access your Patient Portal account and notify us immediately of any unauthorized use of your login information or if you believe that your login is no longer confidential.

We will not answer questions or send protected health information by regular email. Even with these security measures, we cannot guarantee the confidentiality, security or integrity of Patient Portal information. To the fullest extent allowed by law, you agree to not hold NMC, its physician practices, its physicians, providers or any of its staff liable for network infractions beyond our control.