HIPAA & Email/SMS messaging

General Information

- HIPAA stands for the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

- HIPAA was passed by the U.S. government in 1996 in order to establish privacy and security protections for protected health information (PHI)

- Information stored on Ducharme Dermatology PC's servers and PCs is encrypted

- Most popular email services (e.g., Hotmail®, Gmail®, Yahoo®, etc.) do not utilize encrypted email

- Text messages sent via standard SMS are not encrypted or secured

If you send an email to Ducharme Dermatology, PC, the information that is sent is not encrypted. This means a third party may be able to access the information and read it since it is transmitted over the Internet. In addition, once an email from Ducharme Dermatology, PC is received by you, someone may be able to access your email account and read it unless we have sent an encrypted message.

This also applies to standard SMS text messages.

Given the above, note the following:

Email and texting are popular and convenient ways to communicate. In their latest modification to the HIPAA act, the federal government provided guidance on electronic communication and HIPAA. Current Federal guidelines state that if a patient has been made aware of the risks of unencrypted communication, and that same patient provides consent to receive health information via electronic communication, then a health entity may send that patient personal medical information via unencrypted electronic means.

I hereby consent to have Ducharme Dermatology, PC communicate with me by email or standard SMS messaging regarding various aspects of my medical care, which may include, but shall not be limited to, test results, prescriptions, appointments and billing. I understand that email and standard SMS messaging are not confidential methods of communication and may be unsecure. I further understand that, because of this, there is a risk that email and standard SMS messaging regarding my medical care might be intercepted and read by a third party.

Signature   _____

Name   _____

Date   _____

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