



Family Care Associates of Effingham, S.C.

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Patient Portal Policy and Procedures

Family Care Associates of Effingham provides the Patient Portal, in partnership with our electronic medical record vendor eClinicalWorks, as a free service to our patients who wish to view parts of their record and communicate with our staff. Secure messaging can be a valuable communication tool, but has certain risks. In order to manage these risks, we need to impose some conditions of participation. By signing the Consent Form, you agree to these conditions.

How It Works:

A secure web portal is a kind of webpage that uses encryption to keep unauthorized persons from viewing private information. This information is only accessible by the individual who knows the right password to log in to the portal site.

Protecting you Private Health Information (PHI) and Risks:

This method of communication and viewing prevents unauthorized parties from being able to access or read messages while they are in transmission. However, keeping messages secure depends on two additional factors: the secure message must reach the correct email address, and only the correct individual (or someone authorized by that individual) must be able to access it. **We need you to make sure we have your correct email address and you MUST inform us if it ever changes.**

Keep track of who has access to your email account so that only you or someone you authorize can see messages you receive from us. If you think someone has learned your password, you should promptly go to the Portal and change it. Also, it is important to remember that all communication should be through the Portal, not your personal email, or they will not be secure.

It is our intent to offer the Patient Portal as a free service to our patients. We will provide adequate notice of any changes. We understand the importance of privacy in regards to your healthcare and PHI and will continue to strive to make all information as confidential as possible. We will keep all email lists secure and never purposefully share or release this information with any third party.

All data is stored at Family Care Associates and is HIPAA compliant. Please read our Privacy Policy (available online) for more information on how Family Care Associates handles PHI. All new and established patients have signed a HIPAA agreement form.

You agree not to hold Family Care Associates or any of its staff liable for network infractions beyond its control.

Conditions of Participating in the Patient Portal:

Access to this secure Patient Portal is an optional service, and we reserve the right to suspend user access, modify services, or terminate it at any time. If we do suspend this service, we will notify you.

We need you to fully understand and the stated conditions, and by signing the Consent Form, you agree to comply with them. If you do not understand, or do not agree to comply with our policies and procedures, please contact us to revoke your use of the Patient Portal.

Portal Use:

The Patient Portal is intended to provide the following services:

- Secure messaging to FCA staff (please include name and phone number)
- Appointment requests
- Refill requests (please make sure we have correct pharmacy information)
- Communication of lab results
- Review medical summary, visit history, medication list
- Update demographic information
- Review current and past statements

The Patient Portal is NOT intended to provide internet-based diagnostic medical services. Additionally, the following limitations apply:

- No Portal based triage and treatment requests. Diagnosis can only be made and treatment rendered after the patient schedules and visits the provider.
- No emergent communications or services. In an emergency, it is always recommended to dial 911. If you or a dependant is SICK, please call our office to schedule an appointment.
- No requests for narcotic pain medication or stimulants will be accepted
- No messaging of sensitive subject matter (HIV, mental health, etc.) is permitted. Please call our office regarding such matters.

All communications via Patient Portal become part of you permanent patient record

Response Time:

Once an FCA staff member enables you account, you will receive a "welcome email" with details and log in information. Please log in to your Portal account within 48 hours of receiving the message. Again, note that you should never reply to the messages

received in your personal email inbox. Instead, log in to you Portal to review and send messages to ensure privacy and security.

Our hours of operation are 7am-5pm Monday through Friday. We encourage you to use the Portal at any time; however messages sent late in the day or evening are held for us until we return the next business day. Messages and requests are typically handled within 1-2 business days.

Patient Acknowledgement and Agreement:

I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand Family Care Associates Patient Portal Policy and Procedures. I understand the risks associated with online communication between myself and the practice and consent to the conditions outlined above. I addition, I acknowledge that using the Patient Portal is entirely voluntary and will not impact the quality of care I receive at Family Care Associates. I agree to follow the instructions herein, as well as any other instructions that Family Care Associates may impose to communicate online. I have been proactive about asking questions and all of my questions have been answered with clarity. I understand and concur with all information herein.

Patient Name

Patient Signature

Date

Current email address