SHARED NOTES: FAQ'S FOR OUR PATIENTS

WHAT ARE SHARED NOTES AND OPEN NOTES?

After a visit or discussion with your doctor, nurse, or other medical provider, they write a note summarizing your care. The note becomes a part of your medical record and may contain:

- A summary of what you told the doctor or nurse, also called a history
- Findings from an exam, such as your blood pressure, weight, or how your lungs sounded
- Lab, radiology, pathology, or other report or test results
- Your doctor's assessment or diagnosis of any medical conditions or symptoms, also called assessment or impressions
- The treatment plan recommended by your doctor and discussed with you
- Next steps, including upcoming tests, follow up appointments, or referrals

WHERE CAN I FIND THEM IN MYCHART?

You can navigate to the "Appointments and Visits" page to view the notes shared by clinicians. Shared notes are only viewable via MyChart on the web and not your phone.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF READING THE NOTES?

Patients who read their notes report that they:

- Have a better understanding of their health and medical conditions
- Can better recall and follow their care plan
- Feel more in control of their health
- Take better care of themselves
- Do a better job taking their medications as prescribed
- Can identify inaccuracies in the record and play a role in the safety of care
- Feel comfortable sharing notes with care partners and others involved in their care
- Can communicate more clearly, helping to strengthen the partnership between themselves and their health care team

WHAT ABOUT PRIOR NOTES, BEFORE WE IMPLEMENTED OPENNOTES?

Since this is a new process, we are only releasing notes from September 25, 2019 forward. Notes that were written in the past are not included.

HOW CAN I GET THE MOST OUT OF MY NOTES?

Read your notes after a visit to review what was discussed, including the care plan, medication instructions and recommendations for follow up appointments or referrals.

If there are terms you don't understand, look them up, or ask your nurse or doctor for reliable websites or other resources to learn more about your medical conditions. Use the note to make a "to do" list for yourself and take it to a visit with any clinician on your care team. You may decide to share your note with family, informal caregivers, or others who are involved in your health. Sharing is a great way to help

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manage care and to make sure your entire care team is on the same page. When you read the note it may trigger questions or remind you of additional information potentially important for your care. Try to take the appropriate action. Some issues can wait for a next visit; others are best addressed quickly.

WHAT IF I'M WORRIED ABOUT WHAT I MIGHT READ?

Note reading may not be right for everyone. For some patients just knowing that the notes are available, if they ever want to read them or share them with a partner, is enough. If you're nervous, it may be a good idea to start by reviewing a note with your doctor. You don't need to read every note, but referring back to them, even occasionally, to remember what was discussed can help you feel more in control of your health care.

WHAT CAN I DO IF MY PROVIDER DOESN'T RELEASE MY NOTES?

In general, you have a legal right to receive and review your medical records, including the notes. If the notes are not available online, you can always request a paper copy of your notes. Call the Denver Health operator for assistance in contacting our medical records department.

WHY CAN'T I SEE ANY NOTES OR A SPECIFIC NOTE I EXPECTED TO SEE?

- The note may have been written before OpenNotes started
- The doctor, nurse, or other health care professional may not yet be sharing notes
- The note may not be ready
  - After the note is written and approved electronically, it will become available
- Your doctor or nurse may have chosen not to share this particular note
  - We encourage you to talk with the doctor or nurse to make sure you understand the reason for not making a particular note available

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE INFORMATION IN MY NOTE?

Because your note is part of your medical record, it may contain medical language, abbreviations, or terminology that's not so easy to understand. Viewing a list of medical abbreviations may help you with medical terms or diagnoses. If you have questions about your note, write them down so you can discuss them at your next appointment.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I MAY HAVE FOUND AN ERROR IN MY NOTE?

If it's a serious issue, like a potential mistake that could affect your care immediately, contact the office of the health care provider who wrote the note and tell them about your concern.

For other inaccuracies, be sure to write down the correction and bring it to your team's attention so your records can be updated. Use your best judgment about small mistakes. If less immediate issues feel important, bring them up at your next visit.

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY?

Open notes do not change the confidential relationship you have with your health care team; only you and the care team directly involved in your care can access your note. What does change is your ability to share. With OpenNotes, it's easier to share your medical information with a care partner, family

member, or others, but only if you choose. You are in full control of who has access to your note in MyChart, which means you are in full control of your privacy.

CAN PEOPLE WITH PROXY ACCESS READ MY NOTES?

Some patients allow other people to view and use their MyChart account by designating them as a proxy. If a patient has any type of "full access", then that proxy can read the clinical notes (both current and previously released notes).

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