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## **OVERVIEW OF PRIVACY POLICIES FOR OBSERVERS & VOLUNTEERS**

Deer Speech Therapy protects the privacy of our patients' health information. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is a set of federal rules that defines what information is protected, sets limits on how that information may be used or shared, and provides patients with certain rights regarding their information. Deer Speech Therapy has its own policies that reflect these regulations as well as best ethical standards.

These rules protect information that is collected or maintained, (verbally, in paper, or electronic format) that can be linked back to an individual patient and is related to his or her health, the provision of health care services, or the payment for health care services. This includes, but is not limited to, clinical information, billing and financial information, and demographic/scheduling information. **Even the fact that an individual has received speech therapy is private and protected health information.**

Deer Speech Therapy policy and HIPAA regulations limit the use or sharing of protected patient information such as: patient name, address, phone number, diagnosis, medical, financial, behavioral or any other information related to the client may not be shared at any time.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT AND COMPANY POLICIES FOR VOLUNTEERS / OBSERVERS**

1. **Client information must be kept confidential at all times.** If required for a class to have notes regarding an observation session, please use initials only when referring to the client. Do not share address, phone number, financial, behavioral, medical or any other information.
2. **The client's needs always come first.** If during an observation session it is noticed that the client's needs are not being met or if the client is distracted by having a new person in the room, then you might be asked to leave. The clinician will do everything she can to try to accommodate so that the observer can stay, however, the client's needs always come first.
3. **Turn off your electronic devices. No use of phones or tablets during the session.** If you need to take notes, please do so on paper then transfer to electronic means later if necessary.
4. **Observers may watch the session but not participate.** It is ok to be friendly and say hi to the clients. If they engage with you more, please direct your attention to the clinician to see if it is ok to engage more. Every situation is different and having a new person to talk to may be helpful but it may also be distracting. Follow the clinician's lead during the session.
5. **If at any point a parent asks you a question about their child, please direct it to the clinician.**
6. **Save your questions for after the session.** The clinician will answer your questions after the session is over if there is time. If not, phone or e-mail the clinician with questions. Write down questions during the session if needed.

**By signing below, you are agreeing to abide by Deer Speech Therapy company policies listed above.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print or type name: