

Introducing Open Notes

Patients now have online access to many of the notes our health care team writes about a patient's visit. This is related to the national movement towards **Open Notes**. You are invited to read your notes on the [Patient Portal](#) – your secure, confidential patient website. Here is a brief introduction to Open Notes and answers to some frequently asked questions.

What's in the notes?

Each time you have a visit your Student Health Center provider (physician, Nurse Practitioner, Physician Assistant), nurse and others describe what happened in a note. These documents serve many purposes; they are mostly for communication between members of your care team, but they also support quality improvement, and legal requirements. Clinical notes include medical terminology and abbreviations written in a standard format. The Resource button on the Student Health Center website offers multiple information sources including [Healthwise](#), [Medline Plus](#). One typical note outline contains four sections:

- Subjective – Patients and other sources provide the subjective information. This includes the reason for the visit, current symptoms, and may include other details, such as past medical information or medications. Think of this as the 'story' of your problem.
- Objective – Vital signs, physical exam and test results are included in the Objective section. This is what the team learned by examining you and doing tests.
- Assessment – The clinician describes their diagnosis, or potential diagnoses, based on the subjective and objective information from the visit.
- Plan – Finally, the Plan is about "what we are going to do about the problem." It may include behavioral or lifestyle changes, further testing, prescription or over-the-counter medications, referrals, procedures, and when to return to see the SHC provider.

Notes allow the efficient transfer of clinical thought processes and information between health care providers and now, patients. Some notes must include additional information due to various regulatory requirements. Student Health Center providers discuss your condition and treatments during your visit and provide the Visit Notes on the Patient Portal.

If there is incorrect or missing information regarding your notes/chart, please submit a Request to Correct/Amend Health Information to our office.

Why are you sharing notes with patients?

We know from research that patients both like and use **Open Notes**. They report that reading their notes is a way to better understand and feel more in control of their health care.

When will I see a note and how will it work?

You will be able to see a note as soon as a provider has signed the note associated with your visit. You will be able to view all notes and any patient education the provider has decided to give to you.

How do I know the notes are private and confidential?

Open Notes will not change the confidential nature of the notes your Student Health Center provide writes. Only you (and anyone you share your Coyote ID and password with) have access to your notes. Here are steps you can take to help keep your information secure:

- Remember to keep your Coyote ID and password private.
- Whenever you look at your information in the Patient Portal, always exit by logging out when you are finished and close the browser window.

To learn more about Open Notes

Please visit <https://www.opennotes.org/> for additional information on the Open Notes movement.