Patient's Rights

The 1973 American Hospital Association patient bill of rights was the first bill of rights written specifically for patients. Many individual states and provinces have created specific patient rights policies of their own. There still continues to be a lot of variation in standards from region to region and/or from hospital to hospital. When patients are hospitalized, they have the right to respectful care. Patients also have the right to informed consent regarding their care. Patients have the right to receive information and ask questions so that they can make well-considered decisions about their care. A patient has the right to refuse any recommended medical intervention. A patient has the right to continuity of care, and should be able to expect that their healthcare provider will coordinate medical care with other healthcare professionals. A patient has the right to privacy and confidentiality, and that healthcare provider will protect the patient's information and not allow others to know specifics of the patient's illness or situation. The patient has the right to access their medical records and be allowed to provide additional comments and/or corrections. If a patient is given the option to participate in research studies, they have the right to complete information about the study and may refuse to participate. A patient has the right to have help getting another doctor's opinion at the patient's request. A patient has the right to a copy of his or her bills and also has the right to have the charges and bill explained to them.



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Patient's Rights When Hospitalized

Respectful Care
Respectfully-bowing Care-bear
Patients have the right to respect, dignity, and timely, responsive care and attention to his or her needs.

Information
Files
A medical professional must provide informed consent regarding the patient's care. Patients have the right to receive information and ask questions so that they can make well-considered decisions about their care. For informed consent, there needs to be communication between the patient and the healthcare provider which results in the patient's authorization to undergo a specific medical intervention. It is the physician's responsibility to get the patient's written informed consent and document the patient's (or surrogate's) decision in the medical record.

Consent or Refuse Treatment
Treat
A patient has the right to refuse any recommended medical intervention. A patient has the right to refuse any drugs, treatment, or procedures after hearing the medical consequences of refusing and have those decisions respected.

Continuity of Care
Infinity-sign Care-bear
Continuity of care is the quality of care over time. Patients should expect that their healthcare provider will coordinate medical care with other healthcare professionals, and that the patient's healthcare provider will not discontinue treating them when further treatment is required. The healthcare provider should give them enough notice and reasonable help in making alternative care arrangements if needed.

Privacy and Confidentiality
Confidential Lock-and-key
It is essential that a confidential relationship exists between the patient and the healthcare provider in order for an open flow of information for medical care. The healthcare provider will protect the patient's information and not allow others to know specifics of the patient's illness or situation. By preserving confidentiality, patients are granted autonomy in that they retain control over who has access to know the status of their health.

Medical Record Review
Reviewing Medical Record
The patient should have a right of access to their medical records and be allowed to provide additional comments and/or corrections.

Consent or Refuse Part in Research
Researcher
If a patient is given the option to participate in research studies, they have the right to complete information about the study and may refuse to participate. A patient who does choose to participate has the right to stop at any time. In addition, any refusal to participate in a research program will not affect the patient's access to care.

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Health Alternatives

Altar

A patient has the right to have help getting another doctor’s opinion at the patient’s request.

Explanation of Charges and Bills

Explaining Charges and Bills

A patient has the right to a copy of his or her bills and also has the right to have the charges and bill explained to them.

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