

Patients' Rights & Responsibilities

Patient Rights

MHS understands and respects the patients' right to a reasonable response to request and needs for treatment or service, within MHS's capacity, our stated mission, and applicable laws and regulations. MHS's patients, or when appropriate, the patient's legally designated representative, have the right:

1. To respectful care given by competent personnel.
2. Upon request, to be given the name of the attending physician, the names of all other physicians directly participating in the care, and the names and functions of other healthcare persons have direct contact with the patient. To know the reasons for any proposed change in the professional staff responsible for the patient.
3. To every consideration of privacy concerning the patient's medical care. Case discussion, consultation, examination, and treatment are considered confidential and should be conducted discreetly.
4. To have all records pertaining to the medical care treated as confidential except as otherwise provided by law or third-party contractual agreements.
5. To know what hospital rules and regulations apply to patient's conduct.
6. To expect emergency procedures to be implemented without unnecessary delay.
7. To good quality care and high professional standards that are continually maintained and reviewed.
8. To full information in layperson's terms, concerning diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis, including information about alternative treatments and possible complications. When it not possible to give such information to the patient, the information shall be given to the patient's health care agent or health care representative.
9. Except for emergencies, the physician must obtain the necessary informed consent prior to the start of any procedure or treatment.
10. A patient or, in the event the patient is unable to give informed consent, a legally responsible party, has the right to be advised when a physician is considering the patient as a part of a medical care research program or donor program, and the patient, or legally responsible party, must give informed consent prior to actual participation in such a program. A patient, or legally responsible party, may, at any time, refuse to continue in any such program to which he has previously given informed consent.
11. A patient has the right to refuse any drugs, treatment, or procedure offered by the hospital, to the extent permitted by law, and a physician shall inform the patient of the medical consequences of the patient's refusal of any drugs, treatment, or procedure.
12. To assistance in obtaining consultation with another physician at the patient's request and own expense
13. To medical and nursing services without discrimination based upon age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or source of payment.
14. To have access, when possible, to an interpreter if the patient, or legally designated representative, does not speak English. To expect reasonable accommodations for effective communication, including accommodations for hearing, speech and visual impairments.
15. To be provided with upon request, within a reasonable time frame, access to all information contained in the patient's medical records unless access is specifically restricted by the attending physician for medical reasons. To have access, request, amendment and obtain information or disclosures of his or her health information, in accordance with law and regulation.
16. To expect good management techniques to be implemented within the hospital, considering effective use of time, and to avoid personal discomfort to a patient.
17. When medically permissible, a patient may be transferred to another facility only after the patient or a patient's health care agent/health care representative has received complete information and an explanation concerning the needs for an alternative to such a transfer. The institution to which the patient is to be transferred must first have accepted the patient for transfer.
18. To examine and receive a detailed explanation of the bill of services. The right to be informed of the source of the hospital's reimbursement for services and any limitations which may be placed upon care, within a reasonable time.
19. To full information and counseling on the availability of known financial resources for healthcare. To be informed of the Operating Unit's source of reimbursement for services and any limitations that may be placed upon the patient's care.
20. A patient has the right to expect that the health care facility will provide a mechanism whereby he is informed upon discharge of his continuing health care requirements following discharge and the means for meeting them.
21. A patient cannot be denied the right of access to an individual or agency that is authorized to act on his behalf to assert or protect the rights set out in this section.
22. A patient has the right to be informed of his rights at the earliest possible moment in the course of his hospitalization.

Related Patient Rights

- To be free from all forms of abuse and harassment.
- To receive care in a safe environment.
- To have cultural & religious beliefs respected
- To be informed about the outcomes of care including unanticipated outcomes.
- To access protective services
- To have pain treated as effectively as possible.
- To sufficient storage space to meet personal needs and to keep/use personal clothing/possessions unless it infringes on others rights or is medically/therapeutically contraindicated or poses a safety hazard.
- Additionally, patient's family has a right to informed consent of donation of organs and tissues.
 - You have the right to get information about your care in your language.
 - You have the right to get an up-to-date list of all of your current medicines.
 - You should be active in your health care.
 - You should ask questions.
 - You should pay attention to the instructions given to you by your caregivers. Follow the instructions.

- To consult with the Institutional Ethics Committee and to participate in consultation meetings regarding his/her treatment decisions that deal with medical/ethical issues, including issues of conflict resolution, withholding resuscitation, foregoing or withdrawal of life sustaining treatment and participation in investigational studies / clinical trials. To request a copy of the MHS code of ethics policy.
- To be free from restraints and/or seclusion unless clinically necessary to protect the safety of the patient and/or others.
- To pastoral counseling and assistance in obtaining other spiritual services at the patient's request.
- To express spiritual and cultural practices as long as they don't interfere with treatment.
- To formulate an Advance Directive and to have the Operating Unit staff and practitioners who provide care comply with the patient's Advance Directive. When a patient is incapacitated, when an individual presents the hospital with an advance directive, medical power of attorney or similar document executed by the patient and designating an individual to make medical decisions for the patient when incapacitated, then the hospital must, when presented with the document, provide the required notice of its policies to the designated representative.

Rights of Minors and Incompetent Patients:

- To ensure the rights of the neonate, child or adolescent patients, the patient has the right to expect the treatments or individualized needs shall be communicated with the patient's guardians as necessary.
- To appoint a patient's health care agent/health care representative in the event the patient should become incompetent.

Patient Responsibilities

- A patient is expected to cooperate with and follow the given care and treatment with instructions and accept the consequences of not following instructions.
- A patient must follow the rules of the hospital, including those rules concerning: visitation, refraining from smoking, and the use of TV, radio or other electrical equipment.
- A patient must provide information about their health history, including present complaints, past illnesses, hospitalizations and indications of perceived risks in their care.
- A patient is expected to show respect and consideration.
- A patient is expected to be aware of and sensitive to the needs of other patients, especially those in the same room, and not to engage in activity which might be detrimental to those needs.
- A patient must support a safe health care environment and therefore he/she is not permitted to bring a firearm or explosive to the hospital.
- A patient has the responsibility to meet financial obligations to the hospitals and the physician for the services rendered.
- All activities must be consistent with policies of Mercy Health System and the moral and religious beliefs of the sponsors of Mercy Health System. A patient is expected not to engage in any activity which is in violation of those policies and beliefs.
- A patient is expected to ask questions if they do not understand.
- A patient or family member is expected to report concerns related to care, treatment, services and patient safety issues.

Patient Visitation Rights

Hospital must:

- A. Inform each patient (support person, where appropriate) of his or her visitation rights, including any clinical restriction or limitation on such rights, when he or she is informed of his or her rights at the time of admission. (Please see hospital policy on visitation)
- B. Inform each patient (support person, where appropriate) of the right, subject to his or her consent to receive the visitors who he or she designates, including but not limited to, a spouse, a domestic partner, (including a same-sex domestic partner), another family member or a friend and his or her right to withdraw or deny such consent at any time. Justified Clinical Restrictions are described in MHS Patient Visitation policy.
- C. Not restrict, limit or otherwise deny visitation on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

Admission Notification

- To have a family member or representative and their physician of choice notified promptly of their admission to the hospital.

Plan of Care

- To be informed of his or her health status, the right to be involved in care planning and treatment and a right to request, accept or refuse treatment. This right must not be construed as a mechanism to demand the provision of treatment or services deemed medically unnecessary.
- To participate in developing and implementing his or her plan of care.

Complaints

- To submit either verbally or in writing, complaints about his or her care, and to have complaints reviewed and, when possible, resolved.
- To receive notice in writing within 10 days of the resolution of the grievance. The Operating Unit will respond within 10 days to complaint registered by a patient and/or significant other. In addition to submitting complaints to the Operating Unit, a patient also has the right to notify the Pennsylvania Department of Health if the patient believes his or her rights have been violated.
 - To report a violation of your patient rights, you may call the Pennsylvania Department of Health at 1.800.254.5164 or 1.717.783.8980

Mercy Health System is committed to providing the highest quality and safest care for each patient. It is our privilege to serve. If your concerns cannot be resolved at this level, you may contact The Joint Commission (TJC). TJC conducts unannounced accreditation surveys of organizations to determine their compliance with nationally established Joint Commission Standards. These standards deal with the organization's quality, safety of care issues and the safety of the environment in which the care is provided. TJC does not address billing, payment, labor relations issues or individual clinical management of patients. If the concerns in question cannot be resolved at the hospital level, then

The Joint Commission may be contacted as stated below:

By Mail: Division of Accreditation Operations, Office of Quality Monitoring, Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, One Renaissance Boulevard, Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181. By fax to 630.792.5636 or at www.jointcommission.org, using the "Report a Patient Safety Event" link in the "Action Center" on the home page of the website.