Patients’ Rights & Responsibilities

Patient Rights

Mercy Philadelphia understands and respects the patients’ right to a reasonable response to request and needs for treatment or service, within it’s capacity, our stated mission, and applicable laws and regulations. Mercy Philadelphia’s mission, and 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 participating in care, and the homes 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 treatment 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 is 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 he/she is incapacitated, given 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 or, in the event he/she is incapacitated, has the right to refuse any drugs, treatments or surgical procedures 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, treatments or surgical procedures.
12. To assistance in obtaining consultation with another physician at the patient’s request and own expense.
13. To medical assistance and services without discrimination based upon age, race, color, 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 protected, with appropriate safeguards, 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 certain 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 frame.
19. To full information and counseling on the availability of known financial resources for healthcare. To be informed of the Mercy Philadelphia’s source of reimbursement for services and any limitations that may be placed upon the patient’s care.
20. A patient is expected 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 is expected to have 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 restraints and/or isolation 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 staff and practitioners who provide care comply with the patient’s Advance Directive if it is in accordance with law. 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 that treatment, when appropriate, 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 seek a DRM if their 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 hospital and for services rendered.
- All activities must be consistent with policies of Mercy Philadelphia and the moral and religious beliefs of the sponsors of Mercy. A patient is expected not to engage in any activity which violates the moral and religious 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 Mercy Philadelphia’s 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.
- Mercy Philadelphia will respond within 10 days to complaints registered by a patient and/or significant other. In addition to submitting complaints, 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 Philadelphia 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, an independent, non-profit organization accredited by The Joint Commission to conduct 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, 200 Harvard Street, Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181. By Phone: 630.792.5363 or www.jointcommission.org.

Using the “Report a Patient Safety Event” link in the “Action Center” on the home page of the website.