

Patient Rights

The hospital has many functions to perform, including the prevention and treatment of disease, the education of both health professionals and patients and the development of clinical research. All these activities must be conducted with an overriding concern for the patient, and above all, the recognition of his or her dignity as a human being.

A patient handbook is provided to every patient upon admission and lists patient's rights & responsibilities.

ACCESS TO CARE

Individuals shall be accorded impartial access to treatment or accommodations that are available or medically indicated, regardless of race, creed, sex, national origin, or sources of payment for care.

RESPECT AND DIGNITY

The patient has the right to considerate, respectful care at all times and under all circumstances, with recognition of the individual's personal dignity.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The patient has the right, within the law, to personal and informational privacy, as manifested by the following rights:

- To refuse to talk with or see anyone not officially connected with the hospital, including visitors or persons officially connected with the hospital but not directly involved in his care.
- To wear appropriate personal clothing and religious or other symbolic items, as long as they do not interfere with diagnostic procedures or treatment.
- To be interviewed and examined in surroundings designed to assure reasonable visual and auditory privacy. This includes the right to have a person of one's own sex present during certain parts of a physical examination, treatment, or procedure performed by a health professional of the opposite sex and the right not to remain disrobed any longer than is required for accomplishing the medical purpose for which the patient was asked to disrobe.
- To expect that any discussion or consultation involving the patient's case will be conducted discreetly and that individuals not directly involved in providing care will not be present without the patient's permission.
- To have the medical record read only by individuals directly involved in the patient's treatment or the monitoring of its quality, and by other individuals only on written authorization from the patient or that of a legally authorized representative
- To expect all communications and other records pertaining to the patient's care, including the source of payment for treatment, to be treated as confidential.
- To request a transfer to another room if another patient or visitors in the assigned room are unreasonably disturbing. This will be granted when arrangements can be made based on census and other medical considerations.

PERSONAL SAFETY

The patient has the right to expect reasonable safety insofar as the hospital practices and environment are concerned.

IDENTITY

The patient has the right to know the identity and professional status of individuals providing service and/or medical care, and to know which physician or other practitioner is primarily responsible for providing care. This includes the patient's right to know of the existence of any professional relationship among individuals who are administering treatment, as well as the relationship to any other health care or educational institutions involved in patient care.

INFORMATION

The patient has the right to obtain from the practitioner(s) responsible for coordinating medical care, complete and current information concerning the diagnosis (to the degree known), treatment, and any known prognosis. This information should be communicated in terms the patient can reasonably be expected to understand. When it is not medically advisable to give such information to the patient, the information should be made available to a legally authorized representative.

COMMUNICATION

The patient has the right of access for people outside the hospital by means of personal visitation and by verbal or written communication.

When the patient does not speak or understand the predominant language of the community, there should be access to an interpreter. This is particularly true where language barriers are a continuing problem.

CONSENT

The patient has the right to reasonably informed participation in decisions involving health care. To the degree possible, this should be based on a clear concise explanation of the diagnosis and of all technical procedures, including the possibilities of any risk of mortality or serious side effects, problems related to recuperation, and probability of success. The patient should not be subjected to any procedure without providing voluntary, competent, and understanding consent or that of a legally authorized representative, where medically significant alternatives for care or treatment exist.

The patient has the right to know who is responsible for authorizing and performing the procedures or treatment.

The patient shall be informed if the hospital proposes to engage in or perform human experimentation or other research/educational projects affecting care or treatment, and the patient has the right to refuse to participate in any such activity.

CONSULTATION

The patient has the right to request and pay for a consultation with a specialist.

REFUSAL OF TREATMENT

The patient may refuse treatment to the extent permitted by law. When refusal of treatment by the patient or a legally authorized representative prevents the provision of appropriate care in accordance with professional standards, the relationship with the patient may be terminated upon reasonable notice by the physician.

TRANSFER AND CONTINUITY OF CARE

A patient may not be transferred to another facility unless a complete explanation of the need for the transfer and the alternatives to such a transfer has been provided, and unless the transfer is acceptable to the other facility. The patient has the right to be informed by the practitioner responsible for medical care, or by the practitioner's delegate, of any continuing health care requirements following discharge from the hospital.

HOSPITAL CHARGES

Regardless of the source of payment for medical care, the patient has the right to request and receive an itemized and detailed explanation of the total bill for services rendered in the hospital. The patient has the right to timely notice prior to termination of eligibility for reimbursement by any third party payer for the cost of such care.

HOSPITAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

The patient should be informed of the hospital rules and regulations applicable to patient conduct. Patients are entitled to information about the hospital's mechanism for the initiation, review, and resolution of patient complaints.

HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act)

Effective April 14, 2003 patients will have new rights regarding their Privacy. These rights include:

1. Establishes a Facility Privacy Officer (FPO) for each hospital. Donna Scheffler, Director of Health Information Management, is the FPO for Palms West Hospital.
2. Insures patients the right to access/amend, and restrict their records. Patients also have the right to opt out of the directory and request confidential communications.
3. Establishes a mechanism to Notify Patients of their Rights.
4. Limits what information you can see (Minimum Information Necessary).
5. Limits what information we can share and to whom.
6. Guarantees disclosure of who accesses a patient's record.
7. Sets up Criminal Penalties (fines and jail time) for illegal access/disclosure of PHI (Protected Health Information).