

PATIENT'S BILL OF RIGHTS

Minnesota Statute 144.651

The family relations liaisons at Children's Minnesota can help answer your questions about the Minnesota Patient's Bill of Rights.

Contact them at:

- Children's Minneapolis and Children's Minnetonka: 612-813-7393
- Children's St. Paul: 651-220-6888


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childrensMN.org

17. Grievances. Patients shall be encouraged and assisted, throughout their stay in a facility or their course of treatment, to understand and exercise their rights as patients and citizens. Patients may voice grievances and recommend changes in policies and services to facility staff and others of their choice, free from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal, including threat of discharge. Notice of the grievance procedure of the facility or program, as well as addresses and telephone numbers for the Office of Health Facility Complaints and the area nursing home ombudsman pursuant to the Older Americans Act, Section 307(a)(12), shall be posted in a conspicuous place.

Every acute care in-patient facility, every residential program, and every facility employing more than two people that provides out-patient mental health services shall have a written internal grievance procedure that, at a minimum, sets forth the process to be followed; specifies time limits, including time limits for facility response; provides for the patient to have the assistance of an advocate; requires a written response to written grievances; and provides for a timely decision by an impartial decision-maker if the grievance is not otherwise resolved. Compliance by hospitals, residential programs which are hospital-based primary treatment programs, and outpatient surgery centers with Minnesota Statutes §144.691 and compliance by health maintenance organizations with Minnesota Statutes §62D.11 is deemed to be in compliance with the requirement for a written internal grievance procedure.

18. Communication Privacy. Patients may associate and communicate privately with persons of their choice and enter and, except as provided by the Minnesota Commitment Act, leave the facility as they choose. Patients shall have access, at their expense, to writing instruments, stationery, and postage. Personal mail shall be sent without interference and received or opened unless medically or programmatically contraindicated and documented by the physician in the medical record. There shall be access to a telephone where patients can make and receive calls as well as speak privately. Facilities which are unable to provide a private area shall make reasonable arrangements to accommodate the privacy of patients' calls. Upon admission to a facility where federal law prohibits unauthorized disclosure of patient identifying information to callers and visitors, the patient, or the legal guardian or conservator of the patient, shall be given the opportunity to authorize disclosure of the patient's presence in the facility to callers and visitors who may seek to communicate with the patient. To the extent possible, the legal guardian or conservator of a patient shall consider the opinions of the patient regarding the disclosure of the patient's presence in the facility. This right is limited where medically inadvisable, as documented by the attending physician in a patient's care record. Where programmatically limited by a facility abuse prevention plan pursuant to the Vulnerable Adults Protection Act, Minnesota Statutes §626.557, Subdivision 14, Paragraph (b), this right shall also be limited accordingly.

19. Personal Property. Patients may retain and use their personal clothing and possessions as space permits, unless to do so would infringe upon rights of other patients, and unless medically or programmatically contraindicated for documented medical, safety, or programmatic reasons. The facility may, but is not required to, provide compensation for or replacement of lost or stolen items.

20. Services for the Facility. Patients shall not perform labor or services for the facility unless those activities are included for therapeutic purposes and appropriately goal-related in their individual medical record.

21. Choice of Supplier. Residents may purchase or rent goods or services not included in the per diem rate from a supplier

22. Financial Affairs. Competent residents may manage their personal financial affairs, or shall be given at least a quarterly accounting of financial transactions on their behalf if they delegate this responsibility in accordance with the laws of Minnesota to the facility for any period of time.

23. Right to Associate. Upon admission to a facility, the patient or the legal guardian or conservator of the patient, must be given the opportunity to designate a person who is not related who will have the status of the patient's next of kin with respect to visitation and making a health care decision. A designation must be included in the patient's health record. With respect to making a health care decision, a health care directive or appointment of a health care agent under Minnesota Statutes §145C prevails over a designation made under this paragraph. The unrelated person may also be identified as such by the patient or by the patient's family.

24. Advisory Councils. Residents and their families shall have the right to organize, maintain, and participate in resident advisory and family councils.

Each facility shall provide assistance and space for meetings. Council meetings shall be afforded privacy, with staff or visitors attending only upon the council's invitation. A staff person shall be designated the responsibility of providing this assistance and responding to written requests which result from council meetings. Resident and family councils shall be encouraged to make recommendations regarding facility policies.

25. Married Residents. Residents, if married, shall be assured privacy for visits by their spouses and, if both spouses are residents of the facility, they shall be permitted to share a room, unless medically contraindicated and documented by their physicians in the medical records.

26. Transfers and discharges. Residents shall not be arbitrarily transferred or discharged. Residents must be notified, in writing, of the proposed discharge or transfer and its justification no later than 30 days before discharge from the facility and seven days before transfer to another room within the facility. This notice shall include the resident's right to contest the proposed action, with the address and telephone number of the area nursing home ombudsman pursuant to the Older Americans Act, section 307(a)(12). The resident, informed of this right, may choose to relocate before the notice period ends. The notice period may be shortened in situations outside the facility's control, such as a determination by utilization review, the accommodation of newly admitted residents, a change in the resident's medical or treatment program, the resident's own or another resident's welfare, or nonpayment for stay unless prohibited by the public program or programs paying for the resident's care, as documented in the medical record. Facilities shall make a reasonable effort to accommodate new residents without disrupting room assignments.

27. Protection and Advocacy Services. Patients shall have the right of reasonable access at reasonable times to any available rights protection services and advocacy services so that the patient may receive assistance in understanding, exercising, and protecting the rights described in this Section and in other law. This right shall include the opportunity for private communication between the patient and a representative of the rights protection service or advocacy service.

Additional rights in residential programs that provide treatment to chemically dependent or mentally ill minors or in facilities providing services for emotionally disturbed minors on a 24-hour basis:

28. Isolation and Restraints. A minor patient who has been admitted to a residential program as defined in Minnesota Statutes §253C.01 has the right to be free from physical restraint and isolation except in emergency situations involving likelihood that the patient will physically harm the patient's self or others. These procedures may not be used for disciplinary purposes, to enforce program rules, or for the convenience of staff. Isolation or restraint may be used only upon the prior authorization of a physician, psychiatrist, or licensed psychologist, only when less restrictive measures are ineffective or not feasible and only for the shortest time necessary.

29. Treatment Plan. A minor patient who has been admitted to a residential program as defined in Minnesota Statutes §253C.01 has the right to a written treatment plan that describes in behavioral terms the case problems, the precise goals of the plan, and the procedures that will be utilized to minimize the length of time that the minor requires inpatient treatment. The plan shall also state goals for release to a less restrictive facility and follow-up treatment measures and services, if appropriate. To the degree possible, the minor patient and his or her parents or guardian shall be involved in the development of the treatment and discharge plan.

Inquiries or complaints regarding medical treatment or the Patients' Bill of Rights may be directed to:

Minnesota Board of Medical Practice 2829 University Ave. SE, Suite 500 Minneapolis, MN 55414-3246 612-617-2130 • 800-657-3709	Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care P.O. Box 64971 St. Paul, MN 55164-0971
Office of Health Facility Complaints Minnesota Department of Health P.O. Box 64970 St. Paul, MN 55164-0970 651-201-4201 • 800-369-7994	(TDD/TTY, please call 711) 651-431-2555 • 800-657-3591

Medicare beneficiaries may receive information regarding their options under Medicare and their rights and protections by visiting the website for the Office of the Medicare Beneficiary Ombudsman at www.cms.hhs.gov/center/ombudsman.asp

Legislative Intent: It is the intent of the Legislature and the purpose of this statement to promote the interests and well-being of the patients of health care facilities. No health care facility may require a patient to waive these rights as a condition of admission to the facility. Any guardian or conservator of a patient or, in the absence of a guardian or conservator, an interested person, may seek enforcement of these rights on behalf of a patient. An interested person may also seek enforcement of these rights on behalf of a patient who has a guardian or conservator through administrative agencies or in district court having jurisdiction over guardianships and conservatorships. Pending the outcome of an enforcement proceeding the health care facility may, in good faith, comply with the instructions of a guardian or conservator. It is the intent of this section that every patient's civil and religious liberties, including the right to independent personal decisions and knowledge of available choices, shall not be infringed and that the facility shall encourage and assist in the fullest possible exercise of these rights.

Definitions: For the purposes of this statement, "patient" means a person who is admitted to an acute care inpatient facility for a continuous period longer than 24 hours, for the purpose of diagnosis or treatment bearing on the physical or mental health of that person. "Patient" also means a person who receives health care services at an outpatient surgical center or at a birth center, a minor who is admitted to a residential program and any person who is receiving mental health treatment on an out-patient basis or in a community support program or other community-based program.

Public Policy Declaration: It is declared to be the public policy of this state that the interests of each patient be protected by a declaration of a patient's bill of rights which shall include but not be limited to the rights specified in this statement.

1. Information About Rights. Patients shall, at admission, be told that there are legal rights for their protection during their stay at the facility or throughout their course of treatment and maintenance in the community and that these are described in an accompanying written statement of the applicable rights and responsibilities set forth in this statement. In the case of patients admitted to residential programs, the written statement shall also describe the right of a person 16 years old or older to request release as provided in Minnesota Statutes § 253B.04, Subdivision 2, and shall list the names and telephone numbers of individuals and organizations that provide advocacy and legal services for patients in residential programs. Reasonable accommodations shall be made for people who have communication disabilities, and those who speak a language other than English. Current facilities policies, inspection findings of state and local health authorities, and further explanation of the written statement of rights shall be available to patients, their guardians or their chosen representatives upon reasonable request to the administrator or other designated staff person, consistent with chapter 13, the Data Practices Act, and Minnesota Statute §626.557, relating to vulnerable adults.

2. Courteous Treatment. Patients have the right to be treated with courtesy and respect for their individuality by employees of or persons providing service in a health care facility.

3. Appropriate Health Care. Patients shall have the right to appropriate medical and personal care based on individual needs. This right is limited where the service is not reimbursable by public or private resources.

4. Physician's Identity. Patients shall have or be given, in writing, the name, business address, telephone number, and specialty, if any, of the physician responsible for coordination of their care. In cases where it is medically inadvisable, as documented by the attending physician in a patient's care record, the information shall be given to the patient's guardian or other person designated by the patient as his or her representative.

5. Relationship With Other Health Services. Patients who receive services from an outside provider are entitled, upon request, to be told the identity of the provider. Information shall include the name of the outside provider, the address, and a description of the service which may be rendered. In cases where it is medically inadvisable, as documented by the attending physician in a patient's care record, the information shall be given to the patient's guardian or other person designated by the patient as his or her representative.

6. Information about Treatment. Patients shall be given by their physicians complete and current information concerning their diagnosis, treatment, alternatives, risks and prognosis as required by the physician's legal duty to disclose. This information shall be in terms and language the patients can reasonably be expected to understand. Patients may be accompanied by a family member or other chosen representative, or both. This information shall include the likely medical or major psychological results of the treatment and its alternatives. In cases where it is medically inadvisable, as documented by the attending physician in a patient's medical record, the information shall be given to the patient's guardian or other person designated by the patient as his or her representative. Individuals have the right to refuse this information.

Every patient suffering from any form of breast cancer shall be fully informed, prior to or at the time of admission and during her stay, of all alternative effective methods of treatment of which the treating physician is knowledgeable, including surgical, radiological, or chemotherapeutic treatments or combinations of treatments and the risks associated with each of those methods.

7. Participation in Planning Treatment; Notification of Family Members:

a. Patients shall have the right to participate in the planning of their health care. This right includes the opportunity to discuss treatment and alternatives with individual caregivers, the opportunity to request and participate in formal care conferences, and the right to include a family member or other chosen representative, or both. In the event that the patient cannot be present, a family member or other representative chosen by the patient may be included in such conferences. A chosen representative may include a doula of the patient's choice.

b. If a patient who enters a facility is unconscious or comatose or is unable to communicate, the facility shall make reasonable efforts as required under paragraph (c) to notify either a family member or a person designated in writing by the patient as the person to contact

in an emergency that the patient has been admitted to the facility.

The facility shall allow the family member to participate in treatment planning, unless the facility knows or has reason to believe the patient has an effective advance directive to the contrary or knows the patient has specified in writing that they do not want a family member included in treatment planning. After notifying a family member but prior to allowing a family member to participate in treatment planning, the facility must make reasonable efforts, consistent with reasonable medical practice, to determine if the patient has executed an advance directive relative to the patient's health care decisions.

For purposes of this paragraph, "reasonable efforts" include:

1. examining the personal effects of the patient;
2. examining the medical records of the patient in the possession of the facility;
3. inquiring of any emergency contact or family member contacted whether the patient has executed an advance directive and whether the patient has a physician to whom the patient normally goes for care; and
4. inquiring of the physician to whom the patient normally goes for care, if known, whether the patient has executed an advance directive. If a facility notifies a family member or designated emergency contact or allows a family member to participate in treatment planning in accordance with this paragraph, the facility is not liable to the patient for damages on the grounds that the notification of the family member or emergency contact or the participation of the family member was improper or violated the patient's privacy rights.

c. In making reasonable efforts to notify a family member or designated emergency contact, the facility shall attempt to identify family members or a designated emergency contact by examining the personal effects of the patient and the medical records of the patient in the possession of the facility. If the facility is unable to notify a family member or designated emergency contact within 24 hours after the admission, the facility shall notify the county social service agency or local law enforcement agency that the patient has been admitted and the facility has been unable to notify a family member or designated emergency contact. The county social service agency and local law enforcement agency shall assist the facility in identifying and notifying a family member or designated emergency contact. A county social service agency or local law enforcement agency that assists a facility is not liable to the patient for damages on the grounds that the notification of the family member or emergency contact or the participation of the family member was improper or violated the patient's privacy rights.

8. Continuity of Care. Patients shall have the right to be cared for with reasonable regularity and continuity of staff assignment as far as facility policy allows.

9. Right to Refuse Care. Competent patients shall have the right to refuse treatment based on the information required in Right No. 6 in cases where a patient is incapable of understanding the circumstances but has not been adjudicated incompetent, or when legal requirements limit the right to refuse treatment, the conditions and circumstances shall be fully documented by the attending physician in the patient's medical record.

10. Experimental Research. Written, informed consent must be obtained prior to the patient's participation in experimental research. Patients have the right to refuse participation. Both consent and refusal shall be documented in the individual care record.

11. Freedom From Maltreatment. Patients shall be free from maltreatment as defined in the Vulnerable Adults Protection Act. "Maltreatment" means conduct described in Section 626.5572, Subdivision 15, or the intentional and nontherapeutic infliction of physical pain or injury, or any persistent course of conduct intended to produce mental or emotional distress. Every patient shall also be free from nontherapeutic chemical and physical restraints, except in fully documented emergencies, or as authorized in writing after examination by a patient's physician for a specified and limited period of time, and only when necessary to protect the patient from self-injury or injury to others.

12. Treatment Privacy. Patients shall have the right to respectfulness and privacy as it relates to their medical and personal care program. Case discussion, consultation, examination, and treatment are confidential and shall be conducted discreetly. Privacy shall be respected during toileting, bathing, and other activities of personal hygiene, except as needed for patient safety or assistance.

13. Confidentiality of Records. Patients shall be assured confidential treatment of their personal and medical records, and may approve or refuse their release to any individual outside the facility. Copies of records and written information from the records shall be made available in accordance with this subdivision and §§144.291-.144.298. This right does not apply to complaint investigations and inspections by the Department of Health, where required by third party payment contracts, or where otherwise provided by law.

14. Disclosure of Services Available. Patients shall be informed, prior to or at the time of admission and during their stay, of services which are included in the facility's basic per diem or daily room rate and that other services are available at additional charges. Facilities shall make every effort to assist patients in obtaining information regarding whether the Medicare or medical assistance program will pay for any or all of the aforementioned services.

15. Responsive Service. Patients shall have the right to a prompt and reasonable response to their questions and requests.

16. Personal Privacy. Patients shall have the right to every consideration of their privacy, individuality, and cultural identity as related to their social, religious, and psychological well-being.