

Patient Rights & Responsibilities

THE BASIC RIGHTS of all patients at Huntsville Hospital Health System are:

1. Care shall be provided impartially without regard to age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, creed, sexual orientation, national origin, gender identity or expression or source of payment.
2. Patients are entitled to considerate, respectful and dignified care at all times.
3. Patients have the right to receive care in a safe setting.
4. Patients are entitled to personal and informational privacy as required by law. This includes the right to:
 - a. Refuse to see or talk with anyone not officially affiliated with the hospital or involved directly with his/her care;
 - b. Wear appropriate personal clothing, religious or other symbolic items that do not interfere with prescribed treatment or procedures;
 - c. Examination in reasonably private surrounding, including the right to request a person of one's own gender present during certain physical examinations;
 - d. Have one's medical records read and discussed discreetly;
 - e. Confidentiality regarding one's individual care and/or payment sources;
 - f. Data Privacy Rights as described in the Notice of Privacy Practices.
5. Patients and/or patients' legally designated representatives have the right of access to information contained in the patient's medical record, within the limits of the law and in accordance with hospital policies.
6. Patients of the Health System have the right to know the identity and professional status of all persons participating in their care.
7. Patients are entitled to know the status of their condition including diagnosis, recommended treatment and prognosis for recovery.
8. Patients have a right to share in decisions about their care, be told what to expect from their treatment, its risks and benefits, other choices they may have and what may happen if they are not treated. Information will be provided in a way tailored to the patient's age, language and in a manner he or she can understand.
9. Patients have the right to be free from physical restraints which are not medically indicated or necessary.
10. Patients have the right to have their family and physicians promptly notified of their admission to the hospital and, in collaboration with their physicians, to make decisions involving their health care, including the acceptance or refusal of medical care, treatment or services to the extent permitted by law and to be informed of the medical consequences of such refusal.
11. Patients are entitled to formulate advance directives or power of attorney and appoint a surrogate decision maker to make health care decisions on their behalf to the extent permitted by law when a patient is unable to make decisions about their care.
 - a. When a surrogate decision maker is responsible for making care, treatment and services decisions, the Health System will respect the surrogate decision maker's right to refuse care, treatment and services on the patient's behalf.
 - b. The Health System will involve the patient's family in care, treatment, and services decisions to the extent permitted by the patient or surrogate decision maker.
 - c. The Health System will provide the patient or surrogate decision maker with the information about the outcomes of care, treatment and services that the patient needs in order to participate in current and future health care decisions.
 - d. Patient or surrogate decision maker will be informed about unanticipated outcomes of care, treatment and services that relate to sentinel events.
12. Patients are entitled to receive an itemized, detailed explanation of charges related to services rendered on their behalf by the Health System.
13. Patients will not be transferred to another facility or location without explanation of the necessity for such action.
14. A patient's guardian, next of kin or legally authorized responsible person may exercise, to the extent permitted by law, the rights delineated on behalf of the patient if the patient has been judged incompetent in accordance with the law, or is found by his/her physician to be medically incapable of understanding the proposed treatment or procedure, or is unable to communicate his/her wishes regarding treatment, or is a minor.
15. Patients have the right to appropriate assessment and management of pain.
16. Patients have the right, subject to the patient's consent, to receive visitors whom they designate, including, but not limited to, a spouse, domestic partner (including same-sex domestic partner), another family member, or a friend. Patients have the right to withdraw or deny and such consent at any time.
17. Patients have a right to meet with the Ethics Committee, Chaplain or Patient Advocate to discuss any ethical issues and policies. The patients' rights to religious and other spiritual services will be respected.
18. Patients have the right to free language interpreting and translation services which may include hospital-employed or contract interpreting services or trained bilingual staff and may be provided in person, via telephone or video. The Health System provides information to patients who have vision, speech, hearing or cognitive impairments in a manner that meets the patient's needs.
19. Patients have a right to a service animal or aid if access is required to help with the patients' needs and welfare, as well as any potential health, infection control and safety issues.

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20. Patients have a right to leave the hospital (as far as the law allows) even if advised against it. The Health System will not be responsible for any medical issues that may result.

21. Patients have a right to have their complaints handled fairly. Care will not be affected as a result of sharing any complaints with us. See below for process.
22. The Health System will never ask a patient to waive his or her privacy rights as a condition of treatment.

PATIENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE for:

1. Providing the Health System and its practitioners with complete and accurate information regarding present and past illnesses and operations, hospitalizations, medications, insurance and other health-related issues, including any unanticipated changes in their condition.
2. Following recommended treatment plans prescribed and/or administered by their primary practitioner or those assisting him/her, including keeping appointments relative to their care.
3. Asking questions they may have about their treatment and what you need to do to take care of themselves. Patients should inform HH clinicians if they are concerned or notice any changes in their condition.
4. Ensuring prompt and complete payment of their hospital bills.

5. Following hospital rules and regulations relative to patient care and conduct. This includes consideration and respect for the rights and property of other patients and hospital personnel, no smoking policy, as well as responsibility for the actions of their visitors and guests.
6. Providing any living will, power of attorney, or donor forms they may have.
7. Contacting the Health System Compliance and Privacy Department if they are concerned about their privacy.
8. Assuming responsibility for the consequences of their actions, if the patient refuses prescribed treatments or does not follow their practitioner's instructions.

PATIENT QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:

Our goal is that you have an excellent experience during your stay at this Health System location. If at any time you have a question or concern, you may submit a verbal complaint following these steps:

1. Press the call button to speak with your nurse.
2. Ask to speak with your Charge Nurse or Nurse Manager.
3. If your needs remain unmet, contact Customer Service by calling the Patient/Family Representative at (256) 265-9449 or (256) 265-2421, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. All voice mail messages are returned promptly.
4. After hours, on weekends and holidays please ask your nurse or Charge Nurse to contact the Administrative Supervisor or you may dial zero and ask the operator to connect you to the Administrative Supervisor directly.
5. You may also submit a formal written complaint to:

**Huntsville Hospital Health System
Attn: Customer Service Department
101 Sivley Road
Huntsville, AL 35801**

Email: customersvc@hhsys.org

Excellence is our goal! If you feel your verbal or written complaint was not handled courteously and promptly by the Health System, you may submit your complaint to one of the state agencies listed below:

Patient and family members also have the right to access the following governmental agencies:

Alabama Department of Public Health · The RSA Tower
201 Monroe Street · Montgomery, AL 36104 · (800) 356-9596

The Joint Commission · Office of Quality Monitoring
One Renaissance Boulevard · Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois 60181 · (800) 944-6610

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service · KEPRO, the Quality of Improvement Organization
5700 Lombardo Center Drive, Suite 100 · Seven Hills, OH 44131 · (844) 430-9504