

# Patient Care Concerns

Whittier Rehabilitation Hospital wants to ensure all complaints concerning patients and caregivers are investigated completely and resolved promptly. If you have a concern regarding care performed in this hospital, you may obtain a Patient/Family Concern Report from the Nurses Station. The administrator will notify you upon receipt on the complaint, either verbally or in writing. Follow-up will be provided to the patient and/or family within 72 hours of receipt.

## Resolution of Conflict in Care

All conflicts or dilemmas for the hospital, patient, family, or patient care providers should be reported to the WRH primary physician. The primary physician will initiate a treating team conference or family team conference, which includes the patient to discuss issues/concerns with appropriate parties to resolve the conflict. If the conflict can not be resolved, the primary physician reports to the Administrator who will notify the Patient Care Assessment (PCA) Committee. The PCA Committee will then make a decision or refer to legal counsel or other consultant.

## Continuous Public Involvement APR

The hospital provides notices to its publics that when an individual has any concerns about patient care and safety in the organization, he or she is encouraged to contact the organization's management. If the concerns in question cannot be resolved at this level, the hospital is to encourage the individual to contact the Joint Commission. Methods of notice may include, but are not limited to, distribution of information about the Joint Commission, including contact information in published materials such as admission brochures and/or posting of this information on the organization's Web site. A Joint Commission Complaint Form and information on how and where to report is available at the nurse's station, or go to [http://www.jointcommission.org/report\\_a\\_complaint.aspx](http://www.jointcommission.org/report_a_complaint.aspx)

# Patient Responsibilities

- The patient has the responsibility to provide, to the best of his/her knowledge, accurate and complete information about present complaints, past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications, and other matters relating to his/her health. The patient has the responsibility to report unexpected changes in his/her condition to the responsible practitioner. The patient is responsible for making it known whether he/she clearly comprehends a contemplated course of action and what is expected of him/her.
- The patient is responsible for following the treatment plan recommended by the practitioner primarily responsible for his/her care. This may include following the instructions of nurses and allied health personnel as they carry out the coordinated plan and implement the responsible practitioner's orders, and as they enforce the applicable hospital rules and regulations. The patient is responsible for keeping appointments and, when unable to do so for any reason, for notifying the responsible practitioner or the hospital.
- The patient is responsible for his/her actions if he/she refuses treatment or does not follow the practitioner's instructions. The patient has the right to leave the health care facility regardless of physical condition or financial status, although he/she shall be requested to sign a release stating that he/she is leaving against the medical judgment of his/her physician.
- The patient is responsible for assuring that the financial obligations of his/her health care are fulfilled as promptly as possible.
- The patient is responsible for following hospital rules and regulations affecting patient care and conduct.
- The patient is responsible for being considerate of the rights of other patients and hospital personnel, and for assisting in the control of noise, smoking, and the number of visitors. The patient is responsible for being respectful of the property of other persons and of the hospital.



**WHITTIER**  
**Rehabilitation Hospital**  
A MEMBER OF THE WHITTIER HEALTH NETWORK:  
DEDICATED TO YOUR WELL-BEING

145 Ward Hill Avenue, Bradford, MA 01835 • (978) 372-8000  
150 Flanders Road, Westborough, MA 01581 • (508) 870-2222  
**Referrals for Admission (800) 442-1717**  
[www.whittierhealth.com](http://www.whittierhealth.com)

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# Patient Information & Rights



## Philosophy of Patient Care

### We believe:

- in the dignity and value of human life, and that each person is a unique and holistic being and is interdependent with his/her own environment.
- that each individual has both the right and the responsibility to make informed personal choices regarding health and lifestyle.
- that despite the severity of an injury or illness, each individual is capable of maintaining or regaining self-esteem and dignity and to rise above his/her disability.
- that through rehabilitation, people with disabilities can utilize personal resources to achieve individual goals.
- that each individual is a social being motivated to work and contribute as a member of society.

### Code of Ethical Conduct

- We strive to treat all patients, family members, visitors, and employees with dignity, respect and courtesy.
- We will inform the patient and family members about diagnoses, therapeutic plans, goals and risks associated with care and consistently involve them in decisions regarding the patient's care.
- We will not discriminate patients against admission, transfer, or discharge based on their age, sex, color, race, national origin and/or disability. In addition, we will make every attempt to accommodate their cultural and religious background in the planning of care.
- We pledge to always provide care within the scope of our practice and according to standards of care.
- We will not misrepresent our capabilities to the public. Our marketing materials will accurately reflect the services available, level of licensure and accreditation.
- We will adhere to fair billing practices. Patients or third party payers shall only be billed for services actually provided. All billing will be itemized and include dates of services. The hospital follows a formal process to review questions about charges expeditiously.
- We recognize that conflict may arise in the context of providing care, and will seek to resolve conflicts, regardless of the personnel involved, in a fair and objective manner by utilizing appropriate resources.

# Patient Rights & Responsibilities

The basic right of human beings for independence of expression, decision, action, and concern for personal dignity and human relationships are always of great importance. During sickness, however, their presence or absence becomes a vital deciding factor in survival and recovery. Thus it becomes a prime responsibility for hospitals to endeavor to assure that these rights are preserved for their patients.

## Patient Rights

These rights can be exercised on the patient's behalf by a designated surrogate or proxy decision maker if the patient lacks decision-making capacity, is legally incompetent, or is a minor:

- The patient has the right to considerate and respectful care.
  - The patient has a right to access protective services.
  - The patient has a right to freedom from abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, retaliation and humiliation.
  - The patient has the right to and is encouraged to obtain from physicians and other direct caregivers relevant, current, and understandable information concerning diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis.
- Except in emergencies, when the patient lacks decision-making capacity and the need for treatment is urgent, the patient is entitled to the opportunity to discuss and request information related to the specific procedures and/or treatments, the risks involved, the possible length of recuperation, and the medically reasonable alternatives and their accompanying risks and benefits.
- Patients have the right to know the identity of physicians, nurses, and others involved in their care, as well as when those involved are students, residents, or other trainees. The patient also has the right to know the immediate and long-term financial implications of treatment choices, insofar as they are known.
  - The patient has the right to make decisions about the plan of care prior to and during the course of treatment, to refuse a recommended treatment or plan of care to the extent permitted by law and hospital policy, and to be informed of the medical consequences of this action. In case of such refusal, the patient is entitled to other appropriate care and services that the hospital provides or transfer to another hospital. The hospital should notify patients of any policy that might affect patient choice within the institution.
  - The patient has a right to be involved in resolving dilemmas about care decisions.
  - The patient has the right to have an advance directive (such as a living will, health care proxy, or durable power of attorney for health care) concerning treatment or designating a surrogate decision maker with the expectation that the hospital will honor the intent of that directive to the extent permitted by law and hospital policy.

Health care institutions must advise patients of their rights under state law and hospital policy to make informed medical choices, must ask if the patient has an advance directive, and must include that information in patient records. The patient has the right to receive timely information about hospital policy that may limit its ability to implement fully a legally valid advance directive.

- The patient has the right to every consideration of privacy. Case discussion, consultation, examination, and treatment should be conducted so as to protect each patient's privacy.
- The patient has the right to expect that all communications and records pertaining to his/her care will be treated as confidential by the hospital, except in cases such as suspected abuse and public health hazards, when reporting is permitted or required by law. The patient has the right to privacy and should expect that the hospital will emphasize the confidentiality of their personal information when it is released to any other parties, who may be entitled to review it in their records.

In providing care, hospitals have the right to expect behavior on the part of the patients and their relatives and friends, which, considering the nature of their illness, is reasonable and responsible. This statement does not presume to be all-inclusive. It is intended to convey the hospital's concern for the patient and to emphasize the need for the observance of rights and responsibilities of all.

- The patient has the right to review the records pertaining to his/her medical care and to have the information explained or interpreted as necessary, except when restricted by law.
- The patient has the right to expect that, within its capacity and policies, a hospital will make reasonable response to the request of a patient for appropriate and medically indicated care and services. The hospital must provide evaluation, service, and/or referral as indicated by the urgency of the case. When medically appropriate and legally permissible, or when a patient has so requested, a patient may be transferred to another facility. The institution to which the patient is to be transferred must first have accepted the patient for transfer. The patient must also have the benefit of complete information and explanation concerning the need for, risks, benefits, and alternatives to such a transfer.
- The patient has the right to assessment and management of pain, including:
  - Initial assessment and regular reassessment of pain.
  - Education of all relevant providers in pain assessment and management.
  - Education including family when appropriate, regarding personal roles in managing pain as well as the potential limitation and side effects of pain treatments.
  - Communication that pain management is an important part of care.
- The patient has the right to ask and be informed of the existence of business relationships among the hospital, educational institutions, other health care providers, or payers that may influence the patient's treatment and care.
- The patient has the right to consent or decline participation in proposed research studies or human experimentation which may affect care and treatment or requiring direct patient involvement, and to have those studies fully explained prior to consent. A patient who declines to participate in research or experimentation is entitled to the most effective care that the hospital can otherwise provide.
- The patient has the right to expect reasonable continuity of care when appropriate and to be informed by physicians and other caregivers of available and realistic patient care options when hospital care is no longer appropriate.
- The patient has the right to be informed of hospital policies and practices that relate to patient care, treatment, and responsibilities. The patient has the right to be informed of available resources for resolving disputes, grievances, and conflicts, such as ethics committees, patient representatives, or other mechanisms available in the institution. The patient has the right to be informed of the hospital's charges for services and available payment methods.
- The patient has the right to interpreter services.
- The patient has the right to refuse the use of restraints.
- The patient has the right to file grievance against the hospital or individuals authorized to provide care on behalf of the hospital without fear of reprisal. The patient shall receive written notification of follow-up and resolution of grievance including external reporting agencies if patient and/or family is not satisfied with results.