

# Patient rights and responsibilities.

## Purpose:

All patients, their families, their legal guardians, employees, and physicians of MedStar Health are to be treated in a manner that reflects recognition of their basic human rights. Organizational policies and procedures describe the mechanism by which the patient rights are protected and exercised.

## Policy:

1. Patients have the right to be treated with courtesy and respect, and to receive appropriate medical care.
2. We are committed to treating patients in a manner that preserves their dignity, autonomy, self-esteem, civil rights, and involvement in their own care.
3. Patients have the right to expect that their privacy and safety will be protected, and information regarding their care will be treated confidentially.
4. As applicable, each patient or patient representative is provided with a clear explanation of care, including diagnosis, treatment plan, right to refuse or accept care, advance directive options, organ donation and procurement information, and an explanation of the risks and benefits associated with available treatment options.
5. If a patient has an ethical dilemma, he or she should be advised of the availability of ethics consultation services.
6. MedStar Health employees must never access or disclose confidential information that violates the privacy rights of our patients.
7. No MedStar Health employee, affiliated physician or other healthcare partner has a right to access, use or disclose any patient's information other than that necessary to perform his or her job.
8. Patient-specific information is not released or discussed with others unless it is authorized by law, by the patient's written consent or by departmental policies.
9. The patient has the right to expect that within its capacity, the health center must respond reasonably to the request of a patient for services. The center must provide evaluation services and/or referrals as indicated by the urgency of the case. When medically permissible, a patient may be transferred to another physician or treatment facility only after the patient has received complete information and an explanation of the need for alternatives to such a transfer.
10. The patient has the right to obtain information concerning any relationship between the physicians and other healthcare and/or educational providers insofar as those relationships have any impact upon the patient's care. The patient has the right to obtain information as to the existence of any professional relationships among the individuals, by name, who are providing care to the patient.
11. The patient has the right to be advised if the physician proposes to engage in or perform human experimentation affecting the patient's care or treatment. The patient has the right to refuse to participate in such research projects.
12. The patient has the right to examine and receive an explanation of the patient's bill regardless of the source of payment.
13. The patient has the right to know what health center rules and regulations apply to the patient's conduct.
14. The patient has the right to formulate advance directives and appoint a surrogate to make healthcare decisions on the patient's behalf to the extent permitted by law.
15. The patient or designated representative has the right to participate in the consideration of ethical issues that arise during the course of treatment.
16. If the patient has been adjudicated incompetent, the patient's guardian, next of kin or legally authorized responsible party has the right to exercise, to the extent permitted by law, the rights delineated on behalf of the patient.
17. The patient has the right to receive information, at the time of the visit, about available services and the health center's patients' rights policy, as well as the mechanisms for initiating review and, when possible, resolution of patient complaints concerning the quality of care.
18. 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.

# Patient rights and responsibilities. *(continued)*

## Responsibilities of the patient:

1. Patients have a responsibility to provide or make available pertinent information, past or present, relating to their health status. Patients should let the physician and staff know immediately if they do not understand any matter relating to their diagnosis, care and treatment, or if they are given instructions with which they cannot comply. Patients have a responsibility to keep appointments, or telephone the health center when they cannot keep a scheduled appointment.
2. Patients have the responsibility to be considerate of other patients and to see that their escorts are considerate as well.
3. Patients have a responsibility to make prompt arrangements for payment of bills and to be prompt in asking questions they may have concerning their bills.