

**HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY MANUAL**

PATIENT RIGHTS

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PURPOSE:

To outline the rights afforded to each patient at Hackettstown Regional Medical Center (HRMC) and to define the patient's responsibilities.

POLICY:

1. It is the policy of HRMC to assure all Patient Rights entitled to patients by state law and regulation.
2. Each employee is responsible to provide care in harmony with the rights of patients as listed in "Your Rights As A Patient" (see attached).

While you are a patient in Hackettstown Regional Medical Center, you can be assured that you are being cared for by a team of healthcare professionals dedicated to providing you the highest quality care possible. Our goal is to meet your healthcare needs in a manner that is efficient, effective and compassionate.

In order for you to be aware of your rights as a patient, we created this brochure to explain to you the “patient rights” to which you are entitled under state law and regulations.

As a patient in a New Jersey hospital, you have the following rights:

Medical Care

- to receive the care and health services that the hospital is required by law to provide.
- to receive appropriate assessment, management and treatment of pain.
- to receive an understandable explanation from your physician of your complete medical condition, recommended treatment, expected results, risks involved and reasonable medical alternatives. If your physician believes that some of this information would be detrimental to your health or beyond your ability to understand, the explanation must be given to your next of kin or guardian.
- to give informed, written consent prior to the start of specified, non-emergency medical procedures or treatments. Your physician should explain to you, in words you understand, specific details about the recommended procedure or treatment, any risks involved, time required for recovery, and any reasonable medical alternatives.
- to refuse medication and treatment after possible consequences of this decision have been explained clearly to you, unless the situation is life-threatening or the procedure is required by law.
- to be included in experimental research only if you give informed, written consent. You have the right to refuse to participate.

Communication And Information

- to be informed of the names and functions of all healthcare professionals providing you with personal care.
- to receive, as soon as possible, the services of a translator or interpreter if you need one to help you communicate with the hospital’s healthcare personnel.
- to be informed of the names and function of any outside healthcare and educational institutions involved in your treatment. You may refuse to allow their participation.
- to receive, upon request, the hospital’s written policies and procedures regarding lifesaving methods and the use or withdrawal of life-support mechanisms.
- to be advised, in writing, of the hospital’s rules regarding the conduct of patients and visitors.
- to receive a summary of your patient rights that includes the name and phone number of the hospital staff member to whom you can ask questions or complain about any possible violation of your rights. (See last page).

Medical Records

- to have prompt access to the information in your medical record. If your physician feels that this access is detrimental to your health, your next of kin or guardian has a right to see your record.
- to obtain a copy of your medical record at a reasonable fee, within 30 days of a written request to the hospital.

Cost of Hospital Care

- to receive a copy of the hospital payment rates. If you request an itemized bill, the hospital must provide one, and explain any questions you may have. You have the right to appeal any charges.
- to be assisted in obtaining public assistance and private healthcare benefits to which you may be entitled.

Discharge Planning

- to receive information and assistance from your attending physician and other healthcare providers if you need to arrange for continuing healthcare after your discharge from the hospital.

- to receive sufficient time before discharge to arrange for continuing healthcare needs.
- to be informed by the hospital about any appeal process to which you are entitled by law if you disagree with the hospital's discharge plans.

Transfers

- to be transferred to another facility only when you, your family, or guardian has made this request, or in instances where the transferring hospital is unable to provide you with the care you need.
- to receive an advance explanation from a physician of the reasons for your transfer and possible alternatives.

Personal Needs

- to be treated with courtesy, consideration, and respect for your dignity and individuality.
- to have access to storage space in your room for private use. The hospital must also have a system to safeguard your personal property.

Freedom from Abuse and Restraints

- to freedom from physical and mental abuse.
- to freedom from restraints, unless they are authorized by a physician for a limited period of time to protect the safety of you or others.

Privacy and Confidentiality

- to have physical privacy during medical treatment and personal hygiene functions unless you need assistance.
- to confidential treatment of information about you. Information in your record will not be released to anyone outside the hospital without your approval unless it is allowed or required by law.

Legal Rights

- to treatment and medical services without discrimination based on race, age, religion, national origin, sex, sexual preferences, handicap, diagnosis, ability to pay, or source of payment.
- to exercise to the fullest extent possible all your constitutional, civil, and legal rights.

Private Duty Nursing

- to contract directly with a New Jersey licensed registered professional nurse of your choosing for private professional nurse care during your hospitalization. Private nurses must adhere to hospital policies and procedures. The hospital, upon request, will provide you with a list of professional nurses registries that refer nurses for private care.

Questions and Complaints

- to present questions or grievances to a designated hospital staff member and to receive a response in a reasonable period of time. The hospital must provide you with the address and telephone number of the New Jersey Department of Health agency that handles questions and complaints. You may directly contact the NJ Department of Health Complaint Hotline at 1-800-792-9770. (The address of the Department of Health is: Complaint Program, Healthcare Systems Analysis, Market & Warren, P.O. Box 360, Trenton, NJ 08625)

A complaint can be filed directly with the Hackettstown Regional Medical Center Patient Relations Department, Hackettstown Regional Medical Center, 651 Willow Grove Street, Hackettstown, NJ 07840. Telephone: (908) 850-7766.

The public may contact the Joint Commission's Office of Quality Monitoring to report any concerns or register complaints about a Joint Commission-accredited health care organization by either calling 1-800-994-6610 or e-mailing: complaint@jcaho.org

This list of Patient Rights is an abbreviated summary of the current New Jersey laws and regulations governing the rights of hospital patients. For more complete information, consult N.J. Department of Health regulations at N.J.A.C.8:43G-4, or Public Law 1989-Chapter 170, available through your hospital.

Patient Responsibilities

In addition to your rights as a patient, you have a few equally important obligations that will also be of help to you. As a patient, you are responsible for:

- Providing information that is accurate and complete, to the best of your knowledge, about present symptoms, past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications, and other matters (including work or home situations) relating to your health.
- Reporting unexpected changes in your condition to the responsible practitioners.

- Making it known as soon as possible if you do not clearly understand a suggested course of action or treatment, its anticipated risks and benefits, and what is expected of you.
- Following the treatment plan recommended by the physician primarily responsible for your care, or informing your physician if you feel, for any reason, you cannot carry out those instructions.
- Cooperation and courtesy to the best of your ability with nurses and allied health personnel as they carry out your doctor's orders, coordinated care plan, and hospital regulations.
- Familiarizing yourself with the guidelines and information given to you by Hackettstown Regional Medical Center and by your doctor.
- Courtesy toward other patients.

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