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## PATIENT BILL OF RIGHTS

By P.L. 1989, c. 170, the New Jersey Legislature in recognition that a hospitalized patient often feels overwhelmed and uncertain as to his condition and course of treatment, and because the declaration of a bill of rights for hospital patients may lead to fuller understanding and greater security on the part of patients, as well as greater sensitivity by the providers of medical care required that notice of those rights be provided to patients. While these "rights" are not strictly applicable to other settings, they serve as good reminders to health care providers of patient needs, and to patients as to their reasonable expectations. Every person admitted to a general hospital licensed by the State Department of Health pursuant to P.L.1971, c. 136 (C. 26:2H-1 et seq.), shall have the right:

- A. To considerate and respectful care consistent with sound nursing and medical practices;
- B. To be informed of the name of the physician responsible for coordinating his care;
- C. To obtain from the physician complete, current information concerning his diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis in terms he can reasonably be expected to understand;
- D. To receive from the physician information necessary to give informed consent prior to the start of any procedure or treatment;
- E. To refuse treatment to the extent permitted by law and to be informed of the medical consequences of such action;
- F. To privacy to the extent consistent with providing adequate medical care to the patient;
- G. To privacy and confidentiality of all records pertaining to the patient's treatment, except as otherwise provided by law or third party payment contract, and to access to those records;
- H. To expect that within its capacity, the hospital will make reasonable response to the patient's request for services, including the services of an interpreter in a language other than English if 10% or more of the population in the hospital's service area speaks that language;
- I. To be informed by the patient's physician of any continuing health care requirements which may follow discharge and to receive assistance from the physician and appropriate hospital staff in arranging for required follow-up care after discharge;
- J. To be informed by the hospital of the necessity of transfer to another facility prior to the transfer and of any alternatives to it which may exist;
- K. To be informed, upon request, of other health care and educational institutions that the hospital has authorized to participate in the patient's treatment;
- L. To be advised if the hospital proposes to engage in or perform human research or experimentation and to refuse to participate in these projects;
- M. To examine and receive an explanation of the patient's bill, regardless of the source of payment, and to receive information or be advised on the availability of sources of financial assistance to help pay for the patient's care, as necessary;
- N. To expect reasonable continuity of care;
- O. To be advised of the hospital rules and regulations that apply to his conduct as a patient; and,
- P. To treatment without discrimination as to race, age, religion, sex, national origin, or source of payment.

**Please note:**

- If you believe the care provided to you in a hospital by a doctor was improper, you may file a complaint with the Board of Medical Examiners. However,
- Because the regulation of hospitals is under the jurisdiction of the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), if you believe you received improper care at a hospital, you should contact the DHSS Complaint section at (800) 792-9770.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_