

PATIENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

As a patient of Mercy Medical Center, you have rights and responsibilities regarding your health and the services you receive. We value your right to be treated with respect and to receive care in a safe setting. It is our policy to respect your rights, none of which you shall be required to waive in order to receive treatment.

Your Mercy care team is committed to providing complete and current information concerning your diagnosis. We will gladly answer any questions or concerns you may have to ensure understanding. By taking an active role, you become a partner in your health care.

PATIENT RIGHTS

As a patient at Mercy, or as the parent or legal guardian of a minor or adult patient at Mercy, you have the following rights.

Respect and Nondiscrimination

You have the right to considerate, respectful and nondiscriminatory care from physicians, nurses, health care professionals and other hospital employees. Mercy complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. Mercy does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

You have the right to:

- Receive care in a safe setting.
 - Receive kind and respectful treatment from all hospital personnel.
 - Exercise cultural and spiritual beliefs that do not interfere with the well-being of others or the planned course of your medical therapy.
 - Be free from all forms of abuse, harassment, retaliation, humiliation, neglect, and financial or other exploitation.
 - Be free from restraint or seclusion of any form that is not medically necessary or that is used as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience or retaliation by staff.
- Be informed at the time of admission of your right to decline being listed in the patient information registry, which is referred to as “no publicity status,” “no pub status” or simply “NP status.”

NP status prevents the release of a patient’s protected health information (PHI) – including a condition report – to anyone. Anyone seeking information on a patient with NP status – whether by phone or in person – will be told, “We have no information on a patient by that name in our directory.”

In addition to patient/surrogate decision maker request, there are two circumstances in which a patient may be placed on NP status – by court order or if the patient is in custody of law enforcement, who directs Mercy Medical Center to classify the patient as NP status.

Additionally, patients who are minors or who are unable to communicate or understand HIPAA consent forms are placed on NP status upon arrival at the hospital's Emergency Department. The patient will remain on this status until he/she, a parent, guardian or designee makes the decision to change the status and signs the NP revocation.

You have the right to:

- Know the name, identity and professional status of any person providing health care services to you, and to know who is primarily responsible for your care.
- Receive complete and current information concerning your diagnosis in terms you can understand. If it is not medically advisable for you to receive such information, it will only be shared with an appropriate person on your behalf.
- Receive an explanation of any proposed procedure or treatment, including a description of the nature and purpose of the procedure, known risks, serious side effects and treatment alternatives, including the option of no treatment.
- Have access or referral to appropriate legal representation and self-help and advocacy support services.
- Know if your care involves any experimental methods of treatment and have the right to consent or refuse.
- Be informed about the type of pain to anticipate and pain relief measures.
- Be informed by your practitioners of any health-related concerns or instructions for you to follow upon discharge from the hospital.
- Examine your bill and receive an explanation of the charges regardless of the source of payment for your care.

Participation in Treatment Decisions

You have the right to:

- Know all of your treatment options and to participate in decisions about your care. Your spouse, partner, parents, agent or other individuals you have designated may represent you if you cannot make your own decisions. You also have the right to appoint a representative to make health care decisions on your behalf, even when you are capable of doing so.
- Participate in the development and implementation of your plan of care.
- Make informed decisions about your care.
- Access information regarding your condition, unless medically contradicted.
- Consult a specialist at your request and expense.
- Accept or refuse medical care or treatment to the extent permitted by law, and to be informed of the medical consequences of such refusal.

- Have advance directives, such as a living will or a durable power of attorney for health care, and have a health care team that complies with these directives (see section, “Advance Directives” for additional information).
- Have your family and physician notified promptly of your admission to the hospital.

Access to Emergency Services

You have the right to receive screening and stabilizing emergency services whenever and wherever needed if you have severe pain, symptoms or an injury that convinces you your health is in serious jeopardy. This includes the right to:

- Receive evaluation, service and/or referral as indicated by the urgency of your situation.
- Be given complete information regarding any decision to transfer you to another facility – if such a transfer is medically permissible – and understand the need for and alternatives to a transfer (the facility to which you will be transferred must first accept the transfer).

Pain Management Services

You have the right to pain prevention, relief and management services. You have the right to:

- Discuss pain relief options with your physician and nurses and work with your health care team to develop a pain management plan.
- Discuss any worries you have about taking pain medications with your physician and nurses.
- Report pain at any time and have your pain assessed by health care professionals who respond quickly with pain management.
- Notify your physician or nurses if your pain is not relieved and request to have your pain relief medication monitored and adjusted, if needed.

Confidentiality and Disclosure of Health Information

Your privacy is as important to us as it is to you. Mercy is required by federal law to maintain the privacy of your medical information and give you our Notice of Privacy Practices. This Notice is available at mercydesmoines.org and in a booklet that will be offered to you at the time you are admitted or prior to receiving outpatient care.

You have the right to:

- Review your health care record with a health care professional;
- Request and receive a copy of your medical records; and
- Request amendments to your medical records.
- Have personal privacy concerning your own medical care program. Any discussions or consultations among health care professionals about your care, condition, examination and treatment is confidential and should be conducted discreetly. Persons not directly involved in your care must have your permission to be present.
- Expect all communications and clinical records pertaining to your care will be treated confidentially.

- Access information contained in your medical records within a reasonable time frame.
- Be informed at the time of admission of your right to decline being listed in the patient information registry.

Complaints and Appeals

You have the right to a fair, fast and objective review of any complaint you have against Mercy or your physician, nurse or other health care professional. This includes complaints about patient care and safety, wait times, operating hours, the conduct of Mercy personnel and the adequacy of health care facilities.

You have the right to:

- Use Mercy’s complaint process to submit a written complaint/grievance to: Patient Advocate, 1111 6th Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50314. Deliver a verbal complaint/grievance to the Patient Advocate by phone at (515) 643-2861. You may also submit your complaint/grievance to your health care practitioner. If necessary, your complaint/grievance will be forwarded to the Patient Grievance Committee for review. You will receive a written or oral response from Mercy regarding your grievance within seven to 10 days.
- Contact The Joint Commission if you feel your concerns about patient care and/or safety at Mercy have not been sufficiently addressed by mail at Office of Quality and Patient Safety, The Joint Commission, One Renaissance Boulevard, Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181; by fax at (630) 792-5636; or at jointcommission.org, using the “Report a Patient Safety Event” link in the “Action Center” on the home page of the website.
- Refer quality of care concerns, premature discharge grievances or beneficiary complaints to KEPRO, the external peer review organization for hospitals in Iowa. You may send your concern by mail to KEPRO Area 4, 5201 West Kennedy Blvd, Suite 900, Tampa, FL, 33609, by phone at (855) 408-8557 or by fax at (844) 834-7130.
- File grievances regarding the quality of care you received as a dialysis or kidney transplant patient with Heartland Kidney Network, a not-for-profit corporation that serves as a liaison between end-stage renal disease health care providers and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. You may obtain a grievance form by calling (800) 444-9965 or downloading it from network12.org.
- Register complaints with the Health Facilities Division of the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals. You may submit your complaint in writing to the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals, Health Facilities Division/Complaint Unit, Lucas State Office Building, 321 E. 12th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319-0083. You may also fax your complaint to (515) 281-7106 or call (877) 686-0027.

PATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

As a patient at Mercy, or as the parent or legal guardian of a minor or adult patient at Mercy, it is your responsibility to:

- Provide accurate and complete information about the patient's present complaints, past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications and other matters relating to your health – including advance directives – and report whether or not you clearly understand the contemplated course of action and its anticipated effects.
- Follow the treatment plan recommended by the practitioner primarily responsible for your care. This may include following the instructions of nurses and other health care professionals as they implement your practitioner's orders and enforce the applicable hospital rules and regulations.
- Accept the medical consequences if you refuse treatment or if you do not follow your practitioner's instructions. In the unlikely event you choose to leave the hospital against medical/physician advice, please inform your nurse, who will provide you with a release to sign.
- Follow hospital rules and regulations regarding patient care and conduct.
- Be considerate of the rights of other patients and staff, and assist in the control of noise and the number of visitors in your room.
- Photos, videos and audiotapes of staff are not permitted without consent.
- Assure the financial obligations of your care are fulfilled as promptly as possible.

Information Disclosure

You have the right to receive accurate and easily understood information about your health, treatment plan, health care team and facilities. If you speak a language other than English, have a physical/mental disability or simply do not understand something, assistance will be provided so you can make informed decisions about your care.

You have the right to:

- Be informed of your rights before patient care is provided or discontinued, whenever possible.
- Receive information about your rights as a Medicare beneficiary upon admission.
- Be informed of the hospital rules and regulations regarding your conduct as a patient.
- Expect a family member or representative (with your permission) and your physician will be notified promptly upon your admission to the hospital.

VISITING PATIENTS

Visitation privileges will not be restricted, limited or otherwise denied on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability. Mercy will ensure all visitors enjoy full and equal visitation privileges consistent with patient preference and medical safety.

PATIENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

It is our responsibility to maintain a healing environment that encourages recovery. Visitors are reminded disruptive behavior can impact patient's care and recovery. Visitors will be asked to leave the patient's room and/or hospital if they are disturbing this healing environment.

Visitation privileges include the following:

- Receive visitors whom you choose, including, but not limited to, your spouse or domestic partner, another family member or a friend. You have the right to withdraw or deny consent at any time for any visitor.
- Identify a person who may be present for emotional support during your stay, unless the individual's presence interferes with others' rights or safety or is not in your best interest medically, therapeutically or legally. Your support person can make visitation decisions in the event you are unable to do so. (This support person may or may not be your surrogate decision maker or legally authorized representative. Unless you indicate otherwise, the person you identified for emergency notification during admission will be your designated support person.)
- You will not be required to prove the relationship between yourself and a visitor, nor to have visitors prove their relationship to you, unless you are unable to communicate your wishes and a disagreement occurs between two or more people over whether a particular individual should be allowed to visit.

The hospital may develop clinically appropriate visitation restrictions under the following conditions:

- The patient is undergoing care interventions.
- There are infection control issues and/or isolation limitations.
- Visiting interferes with the care of other patients.
- The patient needs or rest or privacy.
- Limitations on the number of visitors are required for clinical reasons or during a specific period of time.
- The patient is in an inpatient substance abuse treatment program that has a protocol that limits visitation.

Other non-clinical circumstances which may affect visiting include:

- Court orders restricting contact with a patient
- Patient incarceration
- Disruptive, threatening or violent behavior of any kind
- Unit specific age requirements for child visitors
- Public Safety procedures

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Individual departments at Mercy Medical Center may have unit specific guidelines and/or restrictions specific to their patient population and services provided. These unit specific guidelines will address:

- Age of visitors permitted
- Number of visitors at a given time
- Visitors staying in patient rooms overnight (Children are not allowed to stay in a patient's room overnight unless accompanied by an adult other than the patient or the patient is able to assume total responsibility for care of the child.)

QUESTIONS/CONCERNS

If you have questions or concerns about your care, please speak to your nurse, the unit charge nurse or the unit nursing director. If you feel the need to discuss your concern further, you may contact Mercy's Patient Advocate at (515) 643-2861.

To access or release information in your medical record, please call Medical Records at (515) 247-4147 (for hospital records) or contact your specific clinic for medical information related to care provided.

A copy of this Patient Rights & Responsibilities guide is available at mercydesmoines.org.