

Patient's Bill of Rights

Lancaster General Hospital (LGH), as a healthcare facility within Lancaster General Health, is committed to delivering quality healthcare to you, our patient, and making your stay as pleasant as possible. The following Statement of The Patient's Rights and Responsibilities is endorsed by the Administration and staff of this facility, and applies to all patients.

- 1. Right to be treated as an individual** - The dignity and worth of the patient are important at LGH. Patients have the right to be treated with respectful care and consideration by competent personnel.
- 2. Right to know the identity of hospital personnel** - A patient has the right, upon request, to be given the name of his/her attending physician, the names of all other physicians directly participating in his/her care, and the names and functions of other healthcare personnel having direct contact with the patient. All LGH personnel having direct patient care will be properly identified. Since LGH is a teaching hospital, patients will meet physicians and other healthcare personnel in training. These persons will be identified as students. The education programs at LGH will help LGH provide the most up-to-date patient care and the presence of students adds to the quality of care received by patients.
- 3. Right to privacy and confidentiality** - Patients have the right to every consideration of privacy concerning medical care at LGH. Within the limitations of accommodations of the LGH, examinations, treatment and discussions concerning the care of patients will be conducted discreetly and handled confidentially.
- 4. Right of access to your medical records** - Under Pennsylvania law, patients have the right, upon request, to have access to all information contained in their medical records, unless access is restricted for medical reasons or prohibited by law. It is LGH's policy to have patients contact their attending physician regarding questions about information contained within their medical record. Patients have the right to confidentiality of all records pertaining to their treatment, except as otherwise provided by law, as otherwise directed by the patient, or by agreement with third party payors such as Blue Cross or Medicare which require LGH to provide information concerning the patient's record in order to accurately process claims.
- 5. Right to be informed of their rights as a patient** - Reasonable effort will be made to inform patients of their rights at the earliest possible opportunity during their hospitalization. Patients also have the right to know what LGH rules and regulations apply to their conduct as a patient.
- 6. Right to prompt emergency treatment** - Patients have the right to expect emergency procedures to be implemented without unnecessary delay. Except for emergencies, patients have the right to receive, in advance of treatment, a full explanation of any contemplated procedure or treatment from their physician so that they can exercise their right to give informed consent.
- 7. Right to participate in development and implementation of plan of care** - The patient or his/her representative has the right to make informed decisions regarding his/her care. The patient's rights include being informed of his/her health status, being involved in care planning and treatment, and being able to request or refuse treatment. Patients have the right to good quality healthcare, and the high professional standards which are continually maintained and reviewed at LGH. Patients have the right to obtain from their physicians information in terms that they can reasonably be expected to understand about their diagnosis, treatment and prognosis, including information about alternative methods of treatment and possible complications. When it is not medically advisable to give patients such information, this information may be explained to a member of their family or other appropriate person. If patients need further clarifications concerning the information given, they are encouraged to ask their physician about the results of examinations and tests, the treatment or operation planned, the person who will administer these, and the expected outcome of treatment.

- 8. Right to Interpretation** - Patients who do not understand written or spoken English have the right to receive the services of a medical interpreter. Patients who are deaf or hard of hearing have a right to receive the services of an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter or the use of devices to communicate with hospital providers and staff. LGH maintains a Language Services Department that offers in-person, video, and telephone interpretation.
- 9. Right to decline treatment** - Patients have a right to make decisions about their care. They may refuse any drugs, treatment or procedure to the extent permitted by law. They will be informed by physicians of the medical consequences of their decision to refuse treatment, but the responsibility for those consequences must, necessarily, be the patient's.
- 10. Right to be informed of research studies and donor programs** - Patients have the right to a full explanation of any research study or donor program in which they may be asked to participate. No research study or donor program will be carried out without the patient's informed consent or that of a legally responsible party. If the patient is asked to participate in a study, they have the right to refuse or withdraw their consent at any time, even after the patient has agreed to participate.
- 11. Right to consultation** - Patients have the right to request and to receive assistance in obtaining a consultation by another physician at any time. A consultation is the medical opinion of another physician; it is obtained at the patient's expense.
- 12. Right to service without discrimination** - Patients have the right to appropriate medical services without discrimination based upon age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, AIDS or HIV status, disability or ability to pay.
- 13. Right to good hospital management** - Patients have the right to expect good management techniques to be implemented within LGH. They may expect every effort will be made to avoid unnecessary delay and, when possible, to avoid undue personal discomfort.
- 14. Right to know about discharge plans** - Patients have the right to participate in all decisions made concerning their discharge from LGH and to be informed of continuing healthcare requirements after discharge and the available resources for meeting them. Patients should discuss these matters with the attending physician. In addition to the patient's attending physician, the Care Management Department at LGH provides assistance in discharge planning. A case manager will provide counseling and advice to the patient or legally responsible party for continuing care at another facility or for assistance at home. The patient has the right to seek review of quality of care concerns, coverage decision, and concerns about his/her discharge.
- 15. Right to transfer to another facility** - When medically advisable, patients may be transferred to another healthcare facility, only after LGH gives them or another appropriate person complete information and explanation concerning the requirements for and alternatives to such a transfer. Patients can be assured that the facility to which they are being transferred has accepted them for admission, and their complete records will be forwarded to the other healthcare facility.
- 16. Right to understand hospital charges** - Patients have the right to examine and receive a complete explanation of their bill. Patient Financial Services will assist the patient in filling out and processing insurance forms. Patients are encouraged to contact the Patient Financial Services office if they have any questions concerning their LGH coverage. Upon request, Patient Financial Services may also be of help providing information and counseling about the possibilities of funds from various sources to help patients or legally responsible party in payment of LGH bills.
- 17. Right of access to an individual or an agency** - Patients have the right of access to an individual or an agency who has been authorized to act on their behalf, and to assist or protect the rights set out in this policy.
- 18. Right to informed consent** - Except for emergencies, each person has the right to necessary informed consent prior to the start of any procedure or treatment, or both. Patients have the right to give or withhold informed consent to produce or use recordings, films or other images of themselves for purposes other than their own care.
- 19. Right to formulate advanced directives and Pennsylvania Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST)** - Each patient has the right to formulate advance directives and to complete a POLST and to have staff and practitioners who provide care at LGH comply with the advance directive or POLST. If in the event that a practitioner objects to such advance directive or POLST on religious or moral grounds, the patient has the right to be transferred to the services of a practitioner who does not have such objections.
- 20. Right to inform family or a representative** - Each patient has the right to have a family member, representative or physician of his/her choice notified promptly of his/her admission to LGH.
- 21. Right to a safe environment** - Each patient has the right to receive care in a safe setting and to be free from all forms of abuse or harassment.

- 22. Right to voice complaint or grievance without recrimination** - LGH encourages its patients or legally responsible party to openly communicate with their care providers about their questions, concerns. A patient and his/her representative may contact LGH's Patient Representative at 717-544-5050 or by written notice sent to the Patient Representative Office, LGH, 555 North Duke Street, P.O. Box 3555, Lancaster, PA 17604-3555, to have complaints or grievances reviewed, and when possible, resolved. LGH also encourages its patients or legally responsible party to utilize any number of external regulatory and governmental bodies regarding their questions, concerns, complaints, or issues.
- 23. Right to be free from restraints for acute medical and surgical care** - Each acute medical and surgical care patient has the right to be free from restraints of any form that are not medically necessary or are used as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience, or retaliation by LGH staff. Each patient has a right to a copy of LGH's policy regarding restraints and seclusion.
- 24. Right to be free from restraints and seclusion for behavior management** - Each behavioral health patient has the right to be free from seclusion and restraints, of any form, imposed as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience, or retaliation by LGH staff. Each patient has a right to a copy of LGH's policy regarding restraints and seclusion.
- 25. Right to know LGH's Patient's Bill of Rights** - Each patient has the right to be informed of his/her rights at the earliest possible moment in the course of his/her hospitalization.
- 26. Right to pain management** - A patient has the right to expect his/her report of pain to be addressed promptly by a concerned staff committed to pain prevention and management. The patient has the right to receive information about pain and pain relief measures, and to have access to pain management techniques and pain specialists.
- 27. Right to designate who may visit during hospitalization** - Patients have the right to designate who can visit them during their hospitalization. LGH will not restrict, limit, or deny visitation on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, AIDS or HIV status, or disability. These individuals do not need to be legally related to the patient. LGH may impose reasonable restrictions on visitation when clinically appropriate.

PATIENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO LGH:

Under Pennsylvania law, LGH also has the right to expect the patient to fulfill patient responsibilities as may be stated in LGH policies affecting patient care and conduct. They are:

1. LGH expects that you or your designated/legal representative will provide accurate and complete information about present complaints, past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications, "advance directives," and other matters relating to your health history or care in order for you to receive effective medical treatment.
2. You are responsible for reporting whether you clearly understand your plan of care and what is expected of you.
3. LGH expects that you will cooperate with all LGH personnel and ask questions if directions and/or procedures are not clearly understood.
4. You are expected to be considerate of other patients and hospital personnel, to assist in the control of noise and visitors in your room, and to observe the Tobacco-Free Environment policy. You are also expected to be respectful of the property of other persons and LGH property.
5. You are expected to help the physicians, nurses, and allied medical personnel in their effort to care for you by following their instructions and medical orders.
6. Duly authorized members of your family or designated legal representative are expected to be available to LGH personnel for review of your treatment in the event you are unable to properly communicate with your healthcare team.
7. It is understood that you assume the financial responsibility of paying for all services rendered either through third-party payers (your insurance company) or being personally responsible for payment for any services that are not covered by your insurance.
8. It is expected that you will not take drugs that have not been prescribed by your attending physician and administered by LGH staff, and that you will not complicate or endanger the healing process by consuming alcoholic beverages or toxic substances during your hospital stay.
9. You are expected to discuss with your health care professional what pain may be anticipated, pain relief options, and what pain management plan will be developed for you. It is expected that you will tell the doctor or nurse about any pain that does not go away, any new pain, and any worries that you may have about taking pain medication.

SUMMARY

Being a good patient does not mean being a silent one. If you have questions, problems, or unmet needs, please let us know. If you would like further clarification of the “Rights and Responsibilities” as they pertain to you, please contact the patient representative office at 717-544-5050. Effective communication with our patients and their families is important to all of us at LGH. Should you need explanation or have a concern about your rights or responsibilities, we offer these guidelines:

- Step 1 -** Please address the concern directly with the staff caring for you. The parties directly involved are most likely to have the best information and should be the starting point to resolve the situation.
- Step 2 -** If resolution is not reached, please ask the staff to involve the manager of the unit. Should this step not resolve the issue, you are encouraged to move to the next level.
- Step 3 -** If resolution of your concern is not reached, please contact the Patient Representative office:
Patient Representative Office - extension 45050

Regardless of whether you have used the hospital’s complaint/grievance process, you have the right to contact the following organizations about your concerns:

The Pennsylvania Department of Health Division of Acute and Ambulatory Care

P.O. Box 90, Harrisburg, PA 17120
1-800-254-5164

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

1-800-633-4227

For concerns related to quality and/or safety of care issues (including premature discharge) or safety of the environment, contact:

The Joint Commission

Online: www.jointcommission.org, use the “Report a Patient Safety Event” link in the “Action Center” on the home page of the website

Fax: 630-792-5636

Mail: The Office of Quality and Patient Safety
The Joint Commission
One Renaissance Boulevard
Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois 60181

For concerns related to disability accessibility or accommodations, contact:

The United States Department of Justice

950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section - NYA
Washington, D.C. 20530

Contact or file a complaint by:

Telephone 800-514-0301 (Voice) or 800-514-0382 (TTY)

Fax: 202-307-1197

Online Complaint forms available at www.ada.gov/complaint

For concerns related to discrimination or any civil rights concerns, contact:

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>

or by mail or phone at

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

200 Independence Avenue, SW Room 509F,
HHH Building Washington, D.C. 20201
Telephone: 1-800-868-1019, 1-800-537-7697 (TDD)

Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>

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