

The GHS Patients Charter

The Ghana Health Service is for all people living in Ghana irrespective of age, sex, ethnic background and religion.

The service requires collaboration between health workers, patients/clients and society. Thus the attainment of optimal health care is dependent on Team Work.

Health facilities must therefore provide for and respect the rights and responsibilities of patients/clients, families, health workers and other health care providers. They must be sensitive to patient's socio-cultural and religious backgrounds, age, gender and other differences as well as the needs of patients with disabilities.

The Ghana Health Service expects health care institutions to adopt the patient's charter to ensure that service personnel as well as patients/clients and their families understand their rights and responsibilities.

This Charter is made to protect the Rights of the patient in the Ghana Health Service. It addresses:

- a. The Right of the individual to an easily accessible, equitable and comprehensive health care of the highest quality within the resources of the country.
- b. Respect for the patient as an individual with a right of choice in the decision of his/her health care plans.
- c. The Right to protection from discrimination based on culture, ethnicity, language, religion, gender, age and type of illness or disability.
- d. The responsibility of the patient/client for personal and communal health through preventive, promotive and simple curative strategies.

THE PATIENT'S RIGHTS

1. The patient has the right to quality basic health care irrespective of his/her geographical location.
2. The patient is entitled to full information on his/her condition and management and the possible risks involved except in emergency situations when the patient is unable to make a decision and the need for treatment is urgent.
3. The patient is entitled to know of alternative treatment(s) and other health care providers within the Service if these may contribute to improved outcomes.
4. The patient has the right to know the identity of all his/her caregivers and other persons who may handle him/her including students, trainees and ancillary workers.
5. The patient has the right to consent or decline to participate in a proposed research study involving him or her after a full explanation has been given. The patient may withdraw at any stage of the research project.
6. A patient who declines to participate in or withdraws from a research project is entitled to the most effective care available.
7. The patient has the right to privacy during consultation, examination and treatment. In cases where it is necessary to use the patient or his/her case notes for teaching and conferences, the consent of the patient must be sought.
8. The patient is entitled to confidentiality of information obtained about him or her and such information shall not be disclosed to a third party without his/her consent or the person entitled

to act on his/her behalf except where such information is required by law or is in the public interest.

9. The patient is entitled to all relevant information regarding policies and regulation of the health facilities that he/she attends.
10. Procedures for complaints, disputes and conflict resolution shall be explained to patients or their accredited representatives.
11. Hospital charges, mode of payments and all forms of anticipated expenditure shall be explained to the patient prior to treatment.
12. Exemption facilities, if any, shall be made known to the patient.
13. The patient is entitled to personal safety and reasonable security of property within the confines of the Institution.
14. The patient has the right to a second medical opinion if he/she so desires.

THE PATIENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The patient should understand that he/she is responsible for his/her own health and should therefore co-operate fully with healthcare providers. The patient is responsible for:

1. Providing full and accurate medical history for his/her diagnosis, treatment, counseling and rehabilitation purposes.
2. Requesting additional information and or clarification regarding his/her health or treatment, which may not have been well understood.
3. Complying with prescribed treatment, reporting adverse effects and adhering, to follow up requests.
4. Informing his/her healthcare providers of any anticipated problems in following prescribed treatment or advice.
5. Obtaining all necessary information, which have a bearing on his/her management and treatment including all financial implications.
6. Acquiring knowledge, on preventive, promotive and simple curative practices and where necessary to seeking early professional help.
7. Maintaining safe and hygienic environment in order to promote good health.
8. Respecting the rights of other patients/clients and Health Service personnel.
9. Protecting the property of the Health facility.

NB:

These rights and responsibilities shall be exercised by accredited and recognized representatives on behalf of minors and patients who are unable for whatever reasons to make informed decisions by themselves;

In all healthcare activities the patient's dignity and interest must be paramount.