

Statement of Patient Rights and Responsibilities

Your Rights As A Patient:

We at St. Francis Hospital believe that the protection and support of the basic human rights of freedom of expression, decision and action are important to the healing and well-being of our patients. Therefore, we strive to treat patients with respect and with full recognition of human dignity. Decisions regarding health care treatment will not be based on race, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability, or sources of payment. As a patient of St. Francis Hospital:

1. You have the right to a reasonable response to your request and need for treatment or service, within the hospital's capacity, its stated mission, and applicable laws and regulations.
2. You have the right to be informed about which physicians, nurses and other healthcare professionals are responsible for your care.
3. You have the right to the information necessary for you to make informed decisions, in consultation with your physician, about your medical care including information about your diagnosis, the proposed care and your prognosis in terms and a manner that you can understand before the start of your care. You also have the right to take part in developing and carrying out your plan of care.
4. You have the right to consent to or refuse medical care, to the extent permitted by law, and to be told of the risks of not having the treatment and other treatments which may be available.
5. You have the right to reasonable access to care. Although the hospital respects your right to refuse treatments offered to you, the hospital does not recognize an unlimited right to receive treatments that are medically ineffective or non-beneficial.
6. You have the right to care that is considerate and respectful of your personal values and beliefs. The hospital strives to be considerate of the ethnic, cultural, psychosocial, and spiritual needs of each patient and family. The hospital acknowledges that care of the dying patient includes care with dignity and respect, management of pain, and consideration for the patient's and family's expression of grief.
7. You have the right to have a family member or representative of your choice and your own physician notified promptly of your admission to the hospital.
8. You have the right to have your family take part in your care decisions with your permission.
9. You have the right, to the extent permitted by law, to have your legal guardian, next of kin, or a surrogate decision maker appointed to make medical decisions on your behalf in the event you become unable to understand a proposed treatment or procedure, are unable to express your wishes regarding your care, or you are a minor. The person appointed has the right, to the extent permitted by law, to exercise your rights as a patient on your behalf.
10. You and your appointed representative have the right to take part in ethical questions that arise during your care.
11. You have the right to communicate with family, friends, and others while you are a patient in the hospital unless restrictions are for therapeutic effectiveness. You also have the right to receive visitors of your choosing including a spouse, a domestic partner (including a same-sex domestic partner), family members, and friends. This right is subject to any clinically necessary or reasonable restrictions imposed by the hospital or your doctor. A copy of these restrictions is available upon request. You also have the right at any time to refuse to have visitors.
12. You and your legal representative have the right to access the information contained in your medical record in a timely manner subject to state and federal law.
13. You may request an explanation of your hospital bill, even if you will not be paying for your care.
14. You have the right to issue advance directives and to have doctors at the hospital and hospital staff follow your directives in accordance with state and federal law.
15. You have the right to personal privacy and for your medical information to be kept confidential within the limits of the law.
16. You have the right to receive care in a safe setting.
17. You have the right to be free from abuse or harassment.
18. You have the right to be free from restraints that are not medically necessary; restraints include physical restraints and medications.
19. You have the right to be free from seclusion and restraints for behavior management except in emergencies as needed for your safety when less restrictive means may have been ineffective.
20. You have the right to consent or refuse to take part in any human research or other educational project affecting your care. You also have the right to be given

information about the expected benefits and risks of any research you choose to take part in and any alternative treatment that might benefit you. Refusing to take part in the research or project will in no way affect your care.

21. You have the right to have your pain assessed and managed properly and to receive information about pain and pain relief measures.
22. You have the right to obtain information concerning the relationship of the hospital to other health care facilities as they relate to your care.
23. You have the right to submit a complaint to the hospital regarding your care or regarding any belief you have that you are being discharged too soon. Your care will not be affected by submitting a complaint. The steps for doing so are at the end of this statement.
24. You have a right to request and/or be provided language assistance, i.e. interpreter services, if you have a language barrier or hearing impairment. This will be provided at no cost to you to help you actively participate in your care.

Your Responsibilities As A Patient

Your contribution to your health care is vital, and you can be involved in the health care process by fulfilling certain responsibilities. As a patient, it is your responsibility to:

1. Provide correct, complete information about your medical condition and any past or current medical treatment.
2. Ask questions or acknowledge when you do not understand the treatment course or care decision.
3. Follow the treatment plan recommended by your physician and other health care professionals. If you choose not to follow your treatment plan, you are responsible.
4. Discuss with your doctor and nurse what to expect regarding pain and pain management relating to your illness, including a) options for pain relief, b) potential limitations and side effects of treatment for pain, and c) any concerns you have about taking pain medicines. It is your responsibility to ask for pain relief when pain begins and to tell your doctor or nurse if your pain is not relieved.
5. Be considerate of other patients and hospital employees.
6. Follow hospital rules regarding the conduct of patients.
7. See that payment of charges for your health care services are paid as promptly as possible. If a third party is paying these charges, you can assist the payment process by providing completed and correct financial and insurance information.

Problem Resolution

Federal law gives every hospital patient the right to be informed of how to submit a complaint to the hospital relating to his/her care or relating the belief that he/she is being discharged from the hospital prematurely. Each patient has the right to be informed of how the complaint will be considered including the response and resolution process developed by the hospital. The complaint resolution process is part of the hospital's confidential Performance Improvement Program.

An issue can be addressed most promptly by speaking with your nurse or another health care professional involved in your care. However, if you feel an issue is not being addressed appropriately, or if you need additional assistance, please call the patient satisfaction director at ext. 4253. If you are calling from outside the hospital, dial (706) 596-4253. If you feel that your issue is not being resolved or addressed satisfactorily by the hospital you may contact:

Georgia Department of Human Resources
Healthcare Section Regulatory Services
2 Peachtree St. NW
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 657-5728
(800) 878-6442

For information on filing a complaint with The Joint Commission, call (800) 994-6610 or visit www.jointcommission.org

Medicare beneficiaries with grievances regarding quality of care, coverage decisions or premature discharge, have a right to refer their complaint for review by the Quality Improvement Organization.

A patient who feels he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability or age has the right to file a complaint. The written account of the alleged discrimination should be sent or delivered to the hospital, preferably within 30 days of the incident.