PATIENT RIGHTS

University Hospital is committed to respecting patient’s rights at all times and under all circumstances.

Patients are given a copy of the Patient Bill of Rights during the admissions process. The Patient Bill of Rights is made visible throughout University Hospital and is posted in 8 different languages on UHN. www.uhnj.org/uhnetweb/

It’s important that staff be familiar with the Patient Bill of Rights.

Here are a few:

- Draw the curtains.
- Keep the patient well-covered during transport.
- Avoid conversations about patients in public areas like elevators, hallways or the cafeteria.
- Put safeguards in place to protect the medical record and personal patient information.

COMPLAINTS

If your patient or a family member has a complaint or concern about their care, do the following: First, calmly speak with the individual to address or resolve the issues; if this is not effective, notify your manager/supervisor. If your manager is not available, contact your department director. If the patient insists on filing a formal complaint, or you are unsure of the next steps and need immediate assistance, contact the Patient Relations Department (2-6410).

What can I do to resolve a complaint? A lot!

Remember what position the patient is in. He’s sick. He’s uncomfortable. He’s frightened, etc. Never forget this.

Don’t just hear what the patient says, listen to him. Let him know that you are listening by maintaining eye contact.

Be kind. Be caring. Keep your promises. Remember that a care giver’s role is not only to provide safe care, but also to provide information, support and reassurance.

Give the patient an opportunity to explain the problem without being interrupted.

Show respect. It says you value the patient.

Recruit help if necessary. Sometimes we all need a little help. Look to the other resources around you for answers. Social workers, therapists and other health care providers may add a fresh, new perspective to resolving a complaint.

PRIVACY

The HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability) Privacy Rule is the first federal protection for the privacy of health information.

The privacy rule requires us to provide information to patients about their privacy rights and how their health information may be used. We accomplish this by providing all patients with a “Privacy Notice” upon admission to the organization.

Do we have a Privacy Officer?

Yes.
The Privacy Rule also requires us to appoint a Privacy Officer to help patients with their questions or complaints regarding their health information. John Ras, our Interim Compliance Officer and Director of Internal Audit, serves as our Privacy Officer (2-8942 or 2-3450)

"Safeguarding the rights of others is the most noble and beautiful end of a human being."  
Kahlil Gilbran
Customer Service is Everyone’s Business!

**ADVANCE DIRECTIVES**
An Advance Directive is used to direct care decisions if the patient is unable to make decisions for him or herself. If this is the case, an appropriate surrogate decision-maker is identified. The surrogate may be a person appointed by the patient in an Advance Directive such as a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care or Health Care Proxy.

**REFUSAL OF TREATMENT**
We cannot force treatment on anyone. Patients have the right to withdraw from a treatment program at any time. They may refuse any and/or all treatment. Our responsibility at University Hospital is to fully inform the patient of consequences we expect as a result of the decision.

**DISCLOSURE**
Patients and their family members have the right to be informed about unanticipated outcomes of care.

**DISCHARGE PLAN**
The patient/family’s discharge planning should begin on the day of admission, including preparation for education and/or equipment. On the day of discharge, the patient/family will receive verbal and written instructions concerning:
- Medications
- Diet
- Activity
- Treatments
- Follow up appointments
- Signs and symptoms to observe for (when to contact the doctor)

**HOSPITAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**
All University Hospital Policies and Procedures are available on UHNet under EMPLOYEE LINKS – HELPFUL CONVENIENCES - www.uhnj.org/uhnetweb/

If you have a question or need support, please contact Sarah Walters, Director of Regulatory Affairs X 2-1329

Customer Service is Everyone’s Business!

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**INFORMED CONSENT**
It is the physician’s responsibility to discuss the informed consent process of disclosing risks, benefits and alternatives with the patient. Staff cannot answer questions or provide disclosure content.

For questions regarding consent, please see the consent policy or call Sarah Walters (2-1329), who will work with the Legal Department to resolve the issue.

**How do you communicate if the patient cannot read [literacy issue] English?** If the patient cannot read, alternate non-writing methods of communication should be used. For example, the consent can be read to the patient and then he/she can make a mark on the form to indicate they understand what has been explained. Two staff members must serve as a witness. This applies to educational information as well.

If the patient’s primary language is not English, provide the Consent Form in the patient’s preferred language. Contact Patient Relations if you need the Consent Form or any other document translated into another language.

**INTERPRETER SERVICES**
University Hospital is happy to provide interpreter services to any patient, at any time and at no cost. The UH Language Service Program, coordinated by the Patient Relations Department, provides the following services.

- UH Volunteer Interpreter Directory
- Phone Interpretation Services
- Document Translation Services
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services

**Remember:** If a patient is deaf or cannot speak English, there are still several ways to ensure clear communication. For complete information regarding the UH Language Service Program contact Olivia Valentino-Davis in the Patient Relations Department (X 2-6410) or go to UHNet and look under EMPLOYEE LINKS – HELPFUL CONVENIENCES - www.uhnj.org/uhnetweb/

**To Ensure Accuracy:** Only qualified, trained hospital personnel, familiar with medical terminology, should serve as interpreters. Do not use family members or friends, unless it is the patient’s preference. This decision should be noted in the patient’s medical record.

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*Preparing for Survey Readiness* is produced by the Public Affairs Department.
For questions or contributions, please contact Kitty Donohue at 2-2365 or donohucm@uhnj.org