

Patient Bill of Rights

What is the Patient's Bill of Rights?

The Patient's Bill of Rights was created to achieve 3 important goals.

1. Help patients feel more confident in the U.S. health care system by:
 - Assuring that the health care system is fair and it works to meet patients' needs
 - Giving patients a way to address any problems they may have
 - Encouraging patients to take an active role in staying or getting healthy
2. Stress the importance of a strong relationship between patients and their health care providers
3. Stress the key role patients play in staying healthy by laying out rights and responsibilities for all patients and health care providers

Compliments and Concerns

You have the right to a fair, fast, and objective review of any complaint you have against your health plan, doctors, hospitals or other health care personnel. This includes complaints about waiting times, operating hours, the actions of health care personnel, and the adequacy of health care facilities.

The 8 key areas of the Patient's Bill of Rights

1. **Information for patients:** You have the right to accurate and easily-understood information about your health plan, healthcare professionals, and health care facilities. If you speak another language, have a physical or mental disability, or just don't understand something, help should be given so you can make informed health care decisions.
2. **Choice of providers and plans:** You have the right to choose health care providers who can give you high-quality health care when you need it.
3. **Access to emergency services:** If you have severe pain, an injury, or sudden illness that makes you believe that your health is in danger, you have the right to be screened and stabilized using emergency services. You should be able to use these services whenever and wherever you need them, without needing to wait for authorization and without any financial penalty.
4. **Taking part in treatment decisions:** You have the right to know your treatment options and take part in decisions about your care. Parents, guardians, family members, or others that you choose can speak for you if you cannot make your own decisions.
5. **Respect and non-discrimination:** You have a right to considerate, respectful care from your doctors, health plan representatives, and other health care providers that does not discriminate against you.
6. **Confidentiality (privacy) of health information:** You have the right to talk privately with health care providers and to have your health care information protected. You also have the right to read and copy your own medical record. You have the right to ask that your doctor change your record if it is not correct, relevant, or complete.
7. **Complaints and appeals:** You have the right to a fair, fast, and objective review of any complaint you have against your health plan, doctors, hospitals or other health care personnel. This includes complaints about waiting times, operating hours, the actions of health care personnel, and the adequacy of health care facilities.
8. **Consumer responsibilities:** In a health care system that protects consumer or patients' rights, patients should expect to take on some responsibilities to get well and/or stay well (for instance, exercising and not using tobacco). Patients are expected to do things like treat health care workers and other patients with respect, try to pay their medical bills, and follow the rules and benefits of their health plan coverage. Having patients involved in their care increases the chance of the best possible outcomes and helps support a high quality, cost-conscious health care system.



Health insurance problems

If you have concerns about your insurance, it is sometimes helpful to start with customer service or a case manager at your health insurance company.