

## *Patient rights and responsibilities*

To help inform you, we have summarized these rights. Complete information is available from the department of customer relations, located at Mercy Hospital and Trauma Center, (608) 756-6810.

Our goal is to give you both high quality and the safest possible care during your visit. Please do not hesitate to discuss any concerns regarding your medical care and treatment—or any aspect of your hospital stay—with your physicians and nurses. If you feel your concerns are not adequately addressed, please contact the department of customer relations at (608) 756-6810.

### **At Mercy Health System, you or your authorized representative have the right to:**

- Treatment without discrimination
- Respect, confidentiality and personal dignity
- Information you can understand
- Participation in decisions about your care
- Care that supports you and your family
- Access to your billing and medical records
- A method to file a complaint

### **Treatment without discrimination**

- You have the right to treatment regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, newborn status, handicap or source of payment.
- You have the right to emergency treatment even if you cannot pay.
- You will not be transferred to another facility, except in some emergencies, unless you are told the reason for the transfer, and another hospital has agreed to accept you as a patient and provide continuing medical care for you.

### **Respect, confidentiality and personal dignity**

- You will be treated with respect and courtesy and will be free from all forms of abuse and harassment.
- You have the right to privacy in treatment.
- Your health care information will be treated as private and confidential, including your medical care program and medical records, including all computerized medical records.

### **Information you can understand**

- You have the right to know about hospital and health system policies and procedures.
- Communication will be effective and understandable and tailored to the patient's age, language, and ability to understand, including the provision of interpreting and translating services.
- You will receive complete and current information concerning diagnosis, treatment and possible outcome in understandable terms.
- We will explain your health status to you and encourage you to participate in planning your care and treatment, including managing your pain.

### **Participation in decisions about your care**

- You have the right to be involved in decisions about your health care and to agree to treatment before it is given, except in emergencies. When you are asked to agree to treatment, you will be told about your condition; the planned procedures or treatment; alternative treatments; the risks and side effects; what could happen if you don't get treatment for your condition; and how likely it is to be successful.
- You may choose not to be treated. Your doctor will tell you what could happen if you don't get treatment. You are responsible for the results if you choose not to be treated or if you do not follow your doctor's instructions.
- We will inform you about the outcomes of your care, including unexpected outcomes.
- You have the right to complete a Power of Attorney (POA) for Healthcare or Living Will (known as advance directives) if you are at least 18 years old. These legal documents tell us your wishes for future health care; the POA for Healthcare also allows you to appoint someone to make your health care decisions if you should become unable to do so. It is the policy of Mercy Health System to follow advance directives to the extent permitted by law.
- You may refuse to participate in research and experimental treatment.
- You have the right to participate in discussion of ethical issues related to your care. Such issues might include not starting or stopping life-sustaining medical treatment and questions about research or clinical trials you might be involved in.

- We will inform you as to any relationship of the health system to other health care and educational institutions, insofar as your care is concerned. You have the right to obtain the name, position and professional relationship of all individuals who are treating you. The teaching program is one of the great strengths of any hospital. The patient may refuse participation in any of these educational programs.

### **Care that supports you and your family**

- When you are admitted, we will tell a family member and your personal physician of your admission.
- We will tell you the name of the physician or other professional responsible for your care.
- You have the right to decide who may or may not visit you during your stay. You have the right to be informed of clinical limitations or restrictions concerning visitors.
- We will make every effort to provide care that meets your emotional, spiritual and cultural needs. While in the hospital, you may perform cultural or spiritual practices as long as they do not harm others or interfere with medical treatment.
- You have the right to receive care in a safe setting.
- Your medical treatment will not include seclusion or restraints unless your medical condition requires it, or it is necessary because of aggressive or violent behavior.
- With your participation, we will assess and manage your pain.
- You will have access to protective services, such as guardianship, when needed.

### **Access to your billing and medical records**

- You may look at your medical and billing records.
- You may request copies of your medical records in a reasonable time at a reasonable cost.
- You have a right to receive information about the health system's Community Care program that provides financial assistance to patients who qualify.

### **A method to file a complaint**

Each Mercy Health System employee/partner is available to address any questions or concerns associated with your visit. We encourage our patients and their families to report all concerns related to care, treatment, services and patient safety to any Mercy employee/partner.

- You may make a complaint about your care or service to the customer relations department, 1000 Mineral Point Ave., Janesville, WI 53548, (608) 756-6810. Complaints will be reviewed promptly and resolved within 7 to 15 business days when possible.
- If you are not satisfied with the resolution of your complaint, you may file a formal grievance. The grievance form is available from the customer relations department and will be provided at your request.
- You may also file a complaint with the following organizations:

Wisconsin Department of Health,  
Division of Quality Assurance  
P.O. Box 2969  
Madison, WI 53701-2969  
(608) 642-6552

Illinois Department of Public Health Office  
of Healthcare Regulation  
525 W. Jefferson St., 5th floor  
Springfield, IL 62761-0001  
(217) 782-2913

The Joint Commission,  
Office of Quality Monitoring  
One Renaissance Blvd.  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181  
Phone: (800) 994-6610; fax (630) 792-5636  
Email: [complaint@jointcommission.org](mailto:complaint@jointcommission.org).

- If you are a Medicare patient and have a quality of care complaint or think you are being discharged from the hospital too soon, you may file an appeal with these quality improvement organizations (QIO):

**Wisconsin:**

MetaStar  
2909 Landmark Place  
Madison, WI 53713  
(800) 362-2320

**Illinois:**

Illinois Foundation of Quality HC  
2625 Butterfield rd., Ste. 102E  
Oakbrook, IL 60521  
(630) 928-5811

- You may file a formal service delivery discrimination complaint at:

Wisconsin Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Enterprise Services, Office of Civil Rights Compliance  
1 W. Wilson, Room 561  
P.O. Box 7850  
Madison, WI 53707  
Voice: (608) 266-9372; TTY/TDD (888) 701-1251

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,  
Office for Civil Rights, Region V  
233 Michigan Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60601  
Voice: (312) 886-2359; TTY/TDD (312) 353-5693

- A guardian or next of kin or other authorized representative may exercise these rights on behalf of a patient who is not capable of making decisions.

### Patient responsibilities

Just as we have responsibilities to you, you have responsibilities to Mercy Health System. By following through on these responsibilities, you will help us give you the best possible care.

- You are responsible for following hospital rules and regulations.
- Your medical team expects that you will provide accurate and complete information about your health and health care.
- Please ask the physicians and nursing staff for more information if you do not understand your illness or treatment.
- We ask that you work actively with your caregivers to implement your treatment plan.
- We ask that you respect the rights of other patients, families, visitors and staff.
- We ask you to be considerate of any other patients, and to see that your visitors are considerate as well, particularly in regard to noise and the number of visitors, which may be annoying to other patients.
- We expect you to keep appointments, or to telephone well in advance when you are unable to keep an appointment.
- We expect you to maintain the treatment recommended by your doctors after leaving the hospital or any Mercy Health System location and to notify them of any changes in your condition after discharge.
- We expect prompt payment of Mercy Health System bills, to provide the information necessary for insurance processing, and to be prompt about asking questions concerning your bills.
- We expect you to inform Mercy Health System administration as soon as possible if you believe any of your rights have been or may be violated.