

# CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## PATIENTS, CARERS AND OTHERS



**Punjab Healthcare Commission**

*Striving for Quality Healthcare in Punjab*

A patient/client or his carer, as the case may be, or any other person to whom healthcare services are being rendered, shall have a right to:

1. Health, well-being and safety;
2. Easy access to registration/help desk to get registered and be guided to the respective services as per requirement.
3. Special arrangements for elderly people and disabled to have easy access to required health services;
4. Be attended to, treated and cared for with due skill, and in a professional manner for the accepted standard of health in complete consonance with the principles of medical ethics;
5. Be made aware of the full identity and professional status of the Healthcare Service Provider(s) and other staff providing services;
6. Be given information to make informed choices about his healthcare and treatment options and/or to give informed consent, in terms and in a language that he understands;
7. Seek second opinion when making decisions about his healthcare, and may be assisted by the Healthcare Establishment/healthcare service provider in this regard;
8. Accept or refuse any treatment, examination, test or screening procedure that is advised to him, exceptions being in cases of emergencies and/or mental incapacity in accordance with the relevant law;
9. Personal health information to be kept secure and confidential;
10. Access his own medical records, including but not limited to, comprehensive medical history, examination(s), investigation(s) and treatment along with the progress notes, and obtain copies thereof;
11. Not to be discriminated against because of age, disability, gender<sup>1</sup>, marriage, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, cultural beliefs, colour, caste and/or creed;
12. Expect that any care and/or treatment being received is provided by duly qualified and experienced staff;
13. Expect that the healthcare service provider or the Healthcare Establishment, as the case may be, has the capacity and required necessary equipment in order and working condition, for rendering the requisite services, including but not limited to treatment;
14. Receive emergency healthcare, unconditionally. However, once the emergency has been dealt with, he may be discharged or referred to another Healthcare Establishment [emergency requiring healthcare, is a situation threatening immediate danger to life<sup>2</sup> or severe irreversible disability, if healthcare is not provided urgently];
15. Be treated with respect, empathy and dignity irrespective of age, disability, gender, marriage, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, socio-economic status, cultural beliefs, colour, caste and/or creed;
16. Be treated in privacy and with dignity, and have his religious and cultural beliefs respected throughout the duration of care, including but not limited to, taking history, examination or adopting any other course of action;

17. Be made aware of procedures for complaints and resolution of disputes and conflicts;
18. File a written complaint to the concerned healthcare service provider, official of the Healthcare Establishment or such other organization/person, as the case may be and be associated throughout the progress of the complaint and its outcome;
19. Seek compensation if he has been harmed by, including but not limited to maladministration, malpractice, negligent treatment, or failure on the part of a healthcare service provider or any staff/employee or others rendering services at the Healthcare Establishment;
20. Be informed and to refuse to participate in research, or any project dealing with his disease, care and treatment;
21. Be accompanied by a family member or carer, as the case may be, particularly in cases of children, females, elderly and disabled. The healthcare service provider and/or the Healthcare Establishment, as the case may be, are to ensure that in cases of children and females in the immediate post anesthesia phase, a female staff shall be present until a family member or carer can join the patient/client, The healthcare service provider and/or the Healthcare Establishment, as the case may be, are also to ensure that in cases of children and females an authorized family member or a carer or if not so possible, at least a female staff is present during physical examination and investigation procedures where physical contact and or exposure of body part(s) is required.
22. Expect that the Healthcare service provider, the Healthcare Establishment, and/or such other person rendering similar services, as the case may be, shall not misuse nor abuse their fiduciary position vis-à-vis him or his carer(s) or family members, as the case may be, for undue favour(s) including but not limited to sexual favour(s) or any other undue or uncalled for reward or privileges in terms of professional fee or gifts etc;
- Be informed as early as possible regarding cancellation and/or postponement of any appointment, surgery, procedure, treatment or meeting, as the case may be;
24. Be made aware of the costs, fee and/or expenses, prior to the consultation, treatment or other services, and/or operation/procedure, as the case may be, and receive payment receipt(s) for the same;
25. Be given written instructions regarding his treatment, including instructions at the time of discharge;
26. Examine and receive an explanation for the bill(s) regardless of the source of payment;
27. End of life care<sup>3</sup>;

Nothing in this Charter prevents any organization/healthcare service provider/Healthcare Establishment from recognizing additional rights of the Patient/Client and/or the carer, as the case may be. The purpose of this Charter is to inculcate and invigorate in the community the understanding and recognition of the fact that health, care and/or treatment is a right of an individual even when he is unborn and the same continues from his cradle to coffin.

This document will be reviewed annually or earlier, as deemed appropriate by the Punjab Healthcare Commission, in view of its experiences, through a consultative process involving patients, former patients, family members, related professionals, staff and other stakeholder groups.

## Explanatory Notes

1. Gender includes male, female, transgender and intersex individuals.
2. Life, in the context of mental emergency, includes those of others.
3. End of Life Care includes healthcare, not only of patients in the final hours or days of their lives, but more broadly, care of all those with terminal illness or terminal condition that has become advanced, progressive and incurable. Accordingly, it may so happen that no treatment may be advisable and or given but the care should continue, keeping in view the ethics of the profession.

The patient/client or carer, as the case may be, is responsible to the Healthcare Establishment, its staff or the Healthcare Service Provider for: -

1. Providing, accurate and complete information, to the best of his knowledge, regarding medical history, including but not limited to, present medical condition and complaints, medications, allergies and special needs, past illnesses, prior hospitalizations etc., as is required;
2. Reporting unexpected changes in his condition;
3. Adhering to the treatment plan prescribed to him;
4. Keeping appointments and when he is going to be late or is unable to do so for any reason, notify the concerned about the same, as soon as possible;
5. Taking responsibility for his actions if he refuses treatment or does not follow the given instructions;
6. Ensuring that the financial obligations of his care are fulfilled as promptly as possible;
7. Following the Healthcare Facilities' Rules and Regulations relating to patient care and conduct of others, including carers and or visitors;
8. Behaving in a courteous and polite manner which is non-threatening;
9. Refraining from conducting any illegal activity while he is at their premises;
10. Informing of any change of address and other requisite information.

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The Punjab Healthcare Commission (PHC) has been established under the Punjab Healthcare Commission Act 2010 as an independent health regulatory body with the mandate to introduce a regime of Clinical Governance through enforcing Minimum Service Delivery Standards (MSDS) at the primary, secondary and tertiary Healthcare Establishments (HCEs) in both the public and private sectors including Homeopathy and Tibb – To improve the quality of healthcare service delivery for all in Punjab. All HCEs are required to implement MSDS to acquire a license from PHC to deliver healthcare services in Punjab.



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**AN INFORMATION HELPLINE**

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