

## **NHG PATIENT CHARTER**

### **OUR OBJECTIVES**

#### **TO PROVIDE PATIENTS WITH QUALITY MEDICAL CARE**

- We, the National Healthcare Group (NHG Health), including our member healthcare institutions, strive to provide quality medical care in treatment of your medical condition, promoting your well-being, and respect your right to appropriate assessment and management of pain. NHG Health aims to provide patient care within professional, financial, ethical and legal norms.

#### **TO TREAT ALL PATIENTS WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT**

- You have the right to be treated with respect, dignity and compassion regardless of race, gender, age, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, social status, mental or physical abilities.

This includes being:

- a) Attended to, and cared for, with the understanding that other patients may have more urgent needs.
  - b) Addressed by your proper name.
  - c) If required, provided with communication services like sign language, local language/dialect or foreign language interpretation to the extent available.
- NHG Health respects your right to seek a second opinion in relation to your care, and to request for discharge against medical advice. In doing so, you have to accept responsibility for any medical or financial consequences resulting from the decision<sup>1</sup>.
  - You shall be provided with respectful and compassionate care at the end of life, and where applicable, appropriate pastoral services.
  - You have the right to make treatment or healthcare decisions in advance. All instructions related to your advance care planning will be respected and complied with, to the extent permitted by our institutions' policies, professional standards and the law.
    - a) We will endeavour to understand your treatment preferences, beliefs and values that are important to you and that may influence your care when you are ill. This includes our providing you with assistance in advance care planning, if you so wish.
    - b) If you have earlier planned an Advance Medical Directive (AMD) as per the AMD Act 1996 (AMD Act), we will respect your known healthcare goals and wishes in accordance with the provisions of the AMD Act. If you do not have an AMD, we will provide you with information to help plan an AMD, if you wish.

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*1 This process is not applicable if you are detained under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) Act (MHCTA), the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC), the Infectious Diseases Act (IDA), or any other applicable Singapore legislation.*

- We aim to administer medical treatment in an environment that provides you with protection from harm by visitors, other patients, staff, and loss or theft of your personal possessions, especially when you are unable to assume responsibility.

## **TO MAINTAIN PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF PATIENTS' HEALTH INFORMATION**

- To the extent possible, you will be interviewed, examined and treated in a private environment. We do not discuss your medical condition with others not involved in your care without your prior consent, unless required by law. This includes your family members, if you make this known to us.
- We are bound by law and professional ethics to keep your health information confidential, including electronic forms of clinical documentation and systems. Unless otherwise required by law, access to your health information is strictly limited to authorised users.
- You may request a copy of your medical report(s), in accordance with our member institutions' policies.
- Information collected from you may be used to contact you and will be used by your institution and its care provider partners, in accordance with the Personal Data Protection Act<sup>2</sup>, Human Biomedical Research Act<sup>3</sup>, and the NHG Personal Data Protection Notification<sup>4</sup>, for provision of care and improvement of systems and processes.

## **TO ENABLE PATIENTS' PARTICIPATION IN SERVICES UNDER MEDICAL SOCIAL SERVICES**

- When you provide information relating to you, your family and/or household members (including financial, social information and personal information) for the purposes of any applications for care arrangements, financial assistance and /or social support services ("*Applications*"), such information may be disclosed to and/or used by any public healthcare institutions<sup>5</sup> or organisations<sup>6</sup> for the purposes of assessing, processing, administering, auditing or supervising such applications and/or for the purposes of data analysis, evaluation or policy-making.

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*2 Refers to latest revised edition of Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) 2012 (<https://sso.agc.gov.sg/Act/PDPA2012>)*

*3 Refers to latest revised edition of Human Biomedical Research Act (HBRA) 2015 (<https://sso.agc.gov.sg/Act/HBRA2015>)*

*4 Refers to latest revised edition of NHG Personal Data Protection Notification (NHG PDPN) (<https://www.nhghealth.com.sg/personal-data-protection-notification>)*

*5 **Public Healthcare Institutions** refers to public Restructured Hospitals (including linked Community Hospitals), Specialist Outpatient Clinics and Polyclinics.*

*6 **Organisations** refer to all care providers and institutions, social service providers (including counselling agencies), financial aid agencies, Government, statutory bodies and other relevant organisations, as needed by NHG Health for such applications.*

## **TO ENABLE PATIENTS' PARTICIPATION IN CLINICAL RESEARCH, HEALTH AND EDUCATION PROGRAMMES**

- Your information may be used to contact and invite you to participate in health and education programmes or relevant clinical research deemed suitable based on your healthcare status.
- If you are invited to volunteer in any clinical research or health and education programme, you are free to choose to participate or not to participate. If you change your mind after you have agreed, you can withdraw from a project at any time without need to provide a reason. Your decision *does not* affect the quality of clinical care provided to you.
- Relevant information about your care may be used to improve the quality of care and future care delivery, including population health programmes. This information may also be shared with national, healthcare and multi-agency efforts to improve the quality of public healthcare services, and for disease surveillance to address public health concerns.
- Relevant information about your care may be used for clinical research, innovation and education purposes. This information may be used by NHG Health and/or made available to programme partners, research and innovation collaborators, and educators involved in clinicians' training. As far as possible, identifiers in your data will be removed prior to such use or sharing to ensure your identity remains anonymous.
- Please be assured that if your personal data is collected, used or disclosed for any of these purposes, we will protect it as required under the Personal Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation.
- If you have any ethical concerns about your care, you can approach our nursing manager or team doctor for access to ethics consultation services where appropriate.

## **TO MAKE KNOWN THE IDENTITIES AND ROLES OF EACH PATIENT'S HEALTHCARE TEAM**

- You are entitled to know the identities of the healthcare practitioners responsible for your care.

## **TO PROVIDE EXPLANATION, EDUCATION AND COUNSELLING TO PATIENTS**

- You are entitled to be informed of your diagnosis, treatment, expected results and any other information deemed relevant and significant by the doctor, in facilitating your decision in the treatment and care process. These include (except in an emergency):
  - a) Detailed explanation of your condition.
  - b) Information on the planned course of treatment and procedures.
  - c) Information on the risks, benefits and alternatives of treatment.
  - d) Unanticipated outcomes, if any.
- You will be informed of your right to refuse or discontinue recommended treatment.

## **TO PROVIDE A CHANNEL FOR PATIENTS' COMPLIMENTS AND FEEDBACK**

- NHG Health appreciates feedback on areas we have done well or can improve upon. If you have any feedback, compliments or complaints, please contact our Service Quality at our institutional contacts from Mondays to Fridays, 9.00am to 5.00pm, or write to us at our institutional contact points. (Table below)

## **PATIENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **PROVISION AND SHARING OF INFORMATION**

You are required to:

- Provide complete, detailed and accurate information about your health, including present and past conditions, allergies, medications or dietary supplements, hospitalisations, healthcare regimes, and any other health-related matters.
- Where applicable, e.g. in the evaluation of hereditary diseases or for genetic counselling purposes, to provide complete, detailed and accurate information about family members relevant to your condition.
- Inform us if you do not understand what our staff tells you about your condition or treatment.
- Allow us to retrieve and review your past health information available on trusted national shared electronic health information systems, including, where necessary for us to provide urgent care to you, information related to voluntary sterilisation, abortion (termination of pregnancy) or organ donation.
- Allow us to share the health information that you have with us with other public healthcare institutions for the purposes of continuity of care and treatment.
- Allow us to contact you via various communication channels, such as mail, email, SMS or other electronic means.

### **FOLLOWING THE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL'S RECOMMENDED TREATMENT PLAN**

You are required to:

- Comply with the treatment plans prescribed by our healthcare professionals.
- Clarify any doubts on instructions given to you for the prescribed treatment and inform our staff if you anticipate problems in following the prescribed treatment.
- Be responsible for any consequences if you refuse medical treatment or leave our premises against medical advice<sup>7</sup>.

### **RESPECT AND HAVE CONSIDERATION FOR OTHERS**

You are required to:

- Abide by all institution rules and regulations pertaining to patients and visitors, including visiting hours if applicable.
- Treat our staff, other patients and visitors with respect and courtesy.

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*7 You have to remain within IMH premises and cannot leave without permission if you are detained under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) Act (MHCTA), the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC), the Infectious Diseases Act (IDA), or any other applicable Singapore legislation.*

- Keep to your appointments and be on time for your appointments. Otherwise, please notify us early.
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of others.
- Be responsible for the safekeeping of your valuables and personal possessions during your visit or stay.
- Treat our properties and facilities with due care and responsibility.
- Participate in any activities aimed at achieving the common good for all patients in our member institutions. This includes activities to promote patient safety and quality improvement, e.g. undergoing any test(s) for the purpose of infection control.

### **RELIGIOUS AND/OR SPIRITUAL COUNSELLING**

- You are welcome to make arrangements for a religious counsellor to visit and pray for you during your stay or visit with us. Please inform the nurse if you are expecting a religious counsellor to visit.
- Out of respect for other patients, please conduct your religious prayer in a manner that will not disturb other patients.
- If you need help in finding a religious counsellor or religious centre in Singapore, please approach our staff who will provide you with a list of contacts where such services are available.
- Where appropriate and possible, a trained nurse or medical social worker can also help to facilitate a spiritual counselling session.

### **INSTITUTION CHARGES**

You are required to:

- Pay your institution and physician bills promptly.
- Seek clarification from our staff if there is a financial issue that you do not understand.
- Ask for help to better understand your health insurance coverage and related policies.

### **CLINICAL TRAINING**

- NHG Health is committed to the education and training of healthcare staff including medical/nursing/allied health students and trainees. The competency and professionalism of our healthcare professionals will benefit from your cooperation in their clinical training.

### **DONATION OF ORGANS**

- Organ donation provides hope for a better quality of life for patients suffering from end-stage organ failures.

- The Human Organ Transplant Act (HOTA) provides for the donation of organs (kidney, heart, liver and cornea) upon brain death. This applies to all Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents aged 21 and above<sup>8</sup>. This law presumes that individuals consent to donation unless they have personally registered their objection with the Ministry of Health by completing an opt-out card. You can help by not objecting to organ donation.
- Details on brain death, HOTA or organ donation can be obtained from MOH at (<https://www.moh.gov.sg/seeking-healthcare/organ-donation/>). You can also contact the National Organ Transplant Unit at 6321 4390 or e-mail [organ.transplant@notu.com.sg](mailto:organ.transplant@notu.com.sg).

## YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH US

- Our doctors or nursing officers are available to discuss any concerns you have about your care.
- If you have any feedback on our services, please contact our Service Quality at our institutional contacts from Mondays to Fridays, 9.00am to 5.00pm, or write to us at our institutional contact points. (Table below)

## INSTITUTION CONTACT POINTS

No.	Institution	Service Quality
1	Tan Tock Seng Hospital	6357 3078 <a href="#">Feedback Form</a>
2	Woodlands Hospital	6363 3000 <a href="#">Feedback Form</a>
3	Khoo Teck Puat Hospital & Yishun Community Hospital	6555 8000 <a href="mailto:ktph.feedback@nhghealth.com.sg">ktph.feedback@nhghealth.com.sg</a> <a href="#">Feedback form</a>
4	NHG Population Health	6496 6767 <a href="#">Feedback Form</a>
5	Institute of Mental Health	6389 1918 <a href="#">Feedback Form</a>
6	National Skin Centre	6253 4455 <a href="#">Feedback Form</a>
7	National Centre for Infectious Diseases	6357 3078 <a href="#">Feedback Form</a>
8	NHG Polyclinics	6496 6767 <a href="mailto:feedback@nhgp.com.sg">feedback@nhgp.com.sg</a> <a href="#">Feedback Form</a>

*8 HOTA is not applicable to persons with mental disorders. However, if patients or their families wish to donate organs voluntarily, they can contact the Ministry of Health for advice and further information.*