

# Mental Health Care Patient Bill of Rights



# **St. Joseph's Health Care London**

## **Mental Health Care Patient Bill of Rights**

### **Introduction**

The Patient Bill of Rights was created with input from the Mental Health Care Patient Council, the Family Advisory Council, as well as patients, families, and staff within St. Joseph's Health Care London's (St. Joseph's) mental health care programs. Its purpose is to raise awareness and protect the dignity and rights of our mental health care patients.

This document is a living resource, evolving as part of our ongoing commitment to fostering a culture of respect and trust between patients, families, and staff.

St. Joseph's is dedicated to respecting all legal rights; however, certain rights may be limited by laws, court orders, or safety considerations. Many rights, though, are fundamental and cannot be removed.

We are committed to promoting awareness of these rights and ensuring that every patient has access to and can understand this document.

The Bill of Rights aligns with St. Joseph's Health Care London's Statement of Patient and Resident Values. For further details, please visit: [www.sjhc.london.on.ca/patients-and-visitors/care-partnership/statement-of-patient-resident-family-values](http://www.sjhc.london.on.ca/patients-and-visitors/care-partnership/statement-of-patient-resident-family-values).

## **The Ten Rights are:**

1. Right to be treated with respect.
2. Right to safety and protection from harm.
3. Right to dignity and independence.
4. Right to quality services that comply with standards.
5. Right to clear and supportive communication.
6. Right to be fully informed.
7. Right to direct treatment decisions and give informed consent to treatment.
8. Right to support.
9. Rights in respect of research or teaching.
10. Right to make a complaint.

## **Right #1 - Right to be treated with respect**

Every patient:

- 1) is a person first, with equal value and dignity and is to be treated with respect, especially when they are vulnerable;
- 2) has the right to be treated with respect, regardless of their race, culture, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, class/ economic position, sexual orientation, gender identity, diagnosis, inpatient status or legal status;
- 3) has the right to privacy and to have it respected;
- 4) has the right to have their needs, wishes, values, beliefs, and experiences respected.

## **Right #2 - Right to safety and protection from harm**

Every patient:

- 1) has the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, denial of care, punishment, force, and unfair treatments;
- 2) has the right not to be held against their will, unless allowed by law;
- 3) has the right to care that helps them heal and protects them from all types of abuse, including physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, and financial;
- 4) has the right to the least restrictive environment. Restraints will only be used as a last resort, after trying other ways to calm the situation. Patients will be told about the process for being released from restraints.

## **Right #3 - Right to dignity and independence**

Every patient:

- 1) has the right to all freedoms in accordance with the law;
- 2) has the right to receive rights advice in accordance with legislation;
- 3) has the right to know why they can't leave a unit and what they need to do to be able to leave;
- 4) has the right to receive treatment and services that uphold their dignity and promote their independence;
- 5) has the right to private communication with others in accordance with the law;
- 6) has the right to confidentiality about personal information and records in accordance with the law;
- 7) has the right to contact clergy or other spiritual advisors of their choice, and to practice their religious and spiritual beliefs, including rituals, diet, customs, and dress;
- 8) has the right to keep and use personal belongings, unless doing so poses a risk of harm to themselves or others;
- 9) has the right to manage their own finances, including access to their money and accurate information about their hospital account, unless deemed financially incapable;
- 10) has the right to a safe environment that respects privacy, supports their need for intimacy, and allows for healthy self-expression. This includes access to private bedroom space and information on contraception, safe sex, and how treatments may affect sexuality;
- 11) has the right, if eligible, to vote in any election and to receive the necessary information to register and vote, as well as assistance in getting to the polling station if on hospital premises;

12) has the right to privately use toilet facilities, unless there is a safety risk to themselves or others;

13) has the right to self-identify and be recognized for their gender, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, including their name, pronouns, and how they choose to express themselves.

## **Right #4 - Right to quality services that comply with standards**

Every patient:

1) has the right to receive services that meet legal, professional, ethical, and other important standards;

2) has the right to express their needs, have those needs shape their service plan, and receive services based on that plan;

3) has the right to fair and equal access to services;

4) has the right to choose their services and will not be denied other options if they decide not to choose a certain treatment or service;

5) has the right to have their record show where the information comes from, include only relevant and useful facts, and avoid making baseless conclusions, showing bias, or using unprofessional labels;

6) has the right to access care without undue difficulty to meet basic needs; every patient has the right to reasonable accommodations required to access services;

7) has the right to choose the care that is least limiting, unless it could cause harm to themselves or others;

8) has the right to receive services in a way that reduces harm and improves their quality of life;

9) has the right to have providers work together to make sure they receive good, continuous, and patient-focused care, including combining other healing methods for wellness and recovery;

10) has the right to know the names and titles of the staff providing services, to share their preferences, and to have those preferences taken into consideration;

11) has the right to receive enough healthy and tasty food, have any special dietary needs met, have choices for vegan and vegetarian meals, have requests for religious meals considered, and be given enough time to eat;

12) has the right to daily access to the outdoors whenever it is safe to do so;

13) has the right to regular and consistent access to educational and recreational activities whenever it is safe to do so;

14) has the right to a quiet, safe and secure sleeping environment;

15) has the right to engage in creating an individualized written plan of care and service based on goals in collaboration with the care team and receive a copy of the care plan;

16) has the right to seek an additional clinical opinion; This may include a person of their choice upon request;

17) has the right to be involved in their discharge/transfer planning and to be notified in a timely way of the discharge/transfer date, whenever possible;

18) has the right to have access to information about various supports available in the community, including peer support, self-help organizations, education and vocational training, income, housing, and social supports.

## **Right #5 - Right to clear and supportive communication**

Every patient:

- 1) has the right to clear, honest, and helpful communication that makes it easy for them to understand important information;
- 2) has the right to collaborative and individualized engagement through all aspects of care;
- 3) has the right to receive care and services in their preferred language, including help with cultural interpretation and translation into their heritage language.

## **Right #6 - Right to be fully informed**

Every patient and their substitute decision maker or appointed representative:

- 1) has the right to be informed of their rights in this Patient Bill of Rights and offered a copy of this Bill;
- 2) has the right to information, in written format if requested, regarding:
  - The perceived problem, diagnosis or condition
  - The nature of the care that is proposed
  - The full name, qualifications, and scope of practice of the provider
  - An explanation of the alternative care options and supports including no treatment
  - An assessment of the benefits, risks (short term and long term), side effects and costs of these options
  - Additional medication-related information such as drug interactions, dosages and withdrawal effects and possible and potential side effects
  - The results of tests and procedures; Responses to requests for additional information about any of the above;



3) has the right to access, view, and request a correction to their health record, including adding a statement of disagreement;

4) has the right to information requested about services and procedures relevant to being a patient at St. Joseph's, such as rules, policies and rights that apply to them, and have access to that information in writing and/or online (if available);

5) has a right to information about implied consent, and how St. Joseph's may collect, use and share health information with internal and external providers;

6) has a right to be told if their information is lost, stolen or shared without authorization.

## **Right #7 - Right to direct treatment decisions and give informed consent to treatment**

Every patient:

1) has the presumption of decision-making capacity unless determined to be incapable;

2) has the right to guide their treatment if they are able to, including making decisions about proposed treatments, asking for written information from staff to help understand and make decisions about treatment, and receiving that information;

3) has the right to expect that, if found incapable, their Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) will make decisions on their behalf in accordance with legal obligations;

4) has the requirement to give voluntary, informed consent before each treatment or plan of treatment can begin, if capable, and has the right to withdraw that consent at any time;

5) has the right to have their prior capable wishes respected to the fullest extent that the law allows.

## **Right #8 - Right to support**

Every patient:

- 1) has the right to receive visits from support persons of their choice, including family, friends, volunteers, and peer supporters, and to receive assistance in contacting them;
- 2) has the right to request the presence of a third party during a physical examination;
- 3) has the right to access confidential support when needed, including counselling, rights advice, advocacy support, legal counsel, Patient Relations, or any other support of their choice.

## **Right #9 - Rights in respect of research or teaching**

Every patient:

- 1) has the right to refuse or give informed consent to join a research study at any time. If they participate, they have the right to be told about the study and ask for a summary of the results, if possible;
- 2) has the right to be informed of care options available to them if they are not eligible for research;
- 3) has the right to be informed when trainees are involved and to refuse student participation in any part of their treatment.

## **Right #10 - Right to make a complaint**

Every patient:

1) has the right to make complaints or suggestions without fear of interference, force, or punishment;

2) has the right to provide oral or written complaints;

3) has the right to make a complaint to the person or people who provided the service, the Program Coordinator, the Program Director, the Vice-President for Mental Health Services, the Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office, Patient Relations, the Patient Ombudsman, or any other relevant individuals. They also have the right to inform the Patient Council or Family Advisory Council about their complaint to seek changes in the system and advocate for improvement;

4) For complaints made through St. Joseph's complaint process: Every patient has the right to have a person of their choice to support them through the complaint process.

- Staff must facilitate the fair, simple, speedy and efficient resolution of complaints.
- The complaint will be acknowledged and documented. The patient will be informed of the progress of the patient's complaint in writing if requested.
- All complaints resolutions will be consistent with this Patient Bill of Rights.

## How to address complaints and concerns at St. Joseph's

At St. Joseph's, we want to make it easy for you to share any concerns you may have. Here's how you can do so:

### Directly with Your Care Team

If your concern is about your care team (staff), you can address it with them directly.

### Manager or Director

You can also share your feedback with the Manager or Director in charge of your unit. They can assist you, even if your concern isn't related to your care team.

### If you want to address your concerns outside your program

You can contact any of the following:

#### Patient Relations Office

- Phone: 519-646-6100, ext. 61234

#### Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office (PPAO)

- Offers individual and systemic advocacy and education for patients.
- Independent from the hospital.

#### For more information:

- Parkwood Institute's Finch Family Mental Health Care Building:
  - **Patient Advocate:** 519-646-6100, ext. 47267
  - **Rights Adviser:** 519-646-6100, ext. 47220
- Southwest Centre for Forensic Mental Health Care:
  - **Patient Advocate:** 519-646-6100, ext. 49451
  - **Rights Adviser:** 519-646-6100, ext. 49447

**Patient Council**

The Patient Council is made up of current and former patients of St. Joseph's who volunteer their time to improve the quality of life and care for all patients.

- Parkwood Institute's Finch Family Mental Health Care Building:  
519-646-6100, ext. 47064
- Southwest Centre for Forensic Mental Health Care:  
519-646-6100, ext. 49646

**Family Advisory Council**

The Family Advisory Council offers advocacy, education, and support for families.

- 519-646-6100, ext. 47440