

Patient Bill of Rights

Forward

The American Hospital Association drafted a Bill of Rights in the 1970's to establish standards for patient care and management during a hospital stay. Since that time, many other groups have produced patient Bills of Rights to provide guidance on the issue of patient protection. They articulate how patients should be handled and instruct patients on how they should comport themselves while under care.

As insurance began to pay a greater portion of the healthcare cost, Bills of Rights began to focus on the financial aspects of healthcare. They were designed to establish standards for insurance companies processing claims and informed patients of the protections available to them. The Affordable Care Act passed in 2010 federalized new standards for insurance carriers including enhanced patient protection.

The following Bill of Rights for chiropractic patients is drafted inform the public on the issue of patient protection. It also serves as a best practices guide for chiropractic physicians desiring to practice at the highest standards. Finally, it is made available to guide provincial and state regulators as they draft legislation and rules for the protection of the public.

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The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996, the Consumer Bill of Rights and Responsibilities of 1998 (also known as the Patient's Bill of Rights), and the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005 (PSQIA), are among the US federal legislative acts and reports that make up a legally binding Patient Bill of Rights. Further, many states, hospitals, and other agencies have codified patient rights. All states should require chiropractic physicians to recognize certain patient rights while providing healthcare services. Further, chiropractic physicians have a right to expect certain behavior on the part of patients.

A summary of chiropractic patient rights and responsibilities are as follows:

A patient has the right to:

- be treated with courtesy, respect, and compassion, and to have impartial access to chiropractic treatment or accommodations, without regard to race, color, gender, national origin, religion, mental or physical impairment/disability, handicap, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, source of payment, or any other status protected by relevant law.
- receive care in a clean, safe environment with appreciation of his or her individual dignity, social and cultural sensitivity, and free from abuse, neglect, or mistreatment.
- expect that the chiropractic physician and staff will comply with laws, rules and regulations under which the chiropractic physician practices.
- have someone remain with him or her for emotional support during the office visit, unless the visitor's presence compromises the patient's or others' rights, safety or health.
- privacy during case discussion, consultation, examination, and treatment.
- expect that all communications and records pertaining to his/her care will be treated as confidential, except in cases such as suspected abuse and public health hazards when reporting is permitted or required by law.
- Expect professional behavior by the clinical and support staff.
- reasonable, prompt, and accurate responses to questions and requests.
- know the names, roles, and credentials of those who are providing his or her care.
- know what patient support services are available, such as language interpretation, large print, or reading support.

- treatment based on current evidence coupled with the chiropractic physician's clinical education and experience.
- information concerning diagnosis, prognosis, planned course of treatment, risks of treatment and non-treatment, treatment alternatives.
- participate in decisions regarding their plan of care.
- reasonable continuity of care and coordination of care with other healthcare providers where or when applicable.
- assistance in obtaining consultation with another health care provider at the patient's request and own expense.
- review the records pertaining to his/her chiropractic care without charge, and to have the information explained or interpreted as necessary.
- refuse any treatment.
- be given, upon request, full information and necessary counseling on the availability of known financial resources to support his or her care.
- receive, upon request, a reasonable estimate of charges for chiropractic care prior to treatment being initiated.
- receive a copy of an itemized bill with an explanation of the charges upon request.
- be informed of the existence of any business relationships between their chiropractic physician and other health care providers, institutions, or payers that may influence the patient's treatment and care.
- know if chiropractic treatment is for purposes of experimental research and to consent to, or refuse to participate in such experimental research prior to the initiation of treatment.
- be informed of available resources for resolving disputes, grievances, and conflicts, including the appropriate state and/or federal licensing or other regulatory agencies.

A patient is responsible for:

- communicating his or her health care goals.
- following the patient care and conduct policies of the health care facility
- providing their chiropractic physician, to the best of his or her knowledge, accurate and complete information about present complaints, past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications, supplements, and other matters relating to his or her health.
- reporting unexpected changes in his or her health status to their chiropractic physician.
- telling their chiropractic physician whether he or she comprehends the treatment plan and the responsibilities of both the patient and the chiropractic physician.

- being on time for appointments and for notifying the staff of the health care facility if unable to do so.
- assuring that the financial obligations related to his or her health care are fulfilled in accordance with the policies of the health care facility.
- accepting the consequences of refusing treatment or properly following the chiropractic physician's instructions.
- showing respect for health workers and other patients.
- reporting wrongdoing and fraud to the appropriate resources or legal authorities.

Government resources:

- http://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/patients/patient_rights/docs/english.pdf
- <http://archive.ahrq.gov/hcqual/>
- <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/psa/regulation/>
- <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/psa/regulation/statute/>
- <http://www.pso.ahrq.gov/legislation/act>
- http://184.80.193.37/consumerinfo/hospitalguide/patients/consumer_help/bill_of_rights.htm
- <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/patientrights.html>
- <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001947.htm>
- <http://www.nmh.org/nm/hospital-guide-patient-bill-rights-responsibilities>
- http://www.vhi.org/hguide_patientbillofrights.asp
- http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0300-0399/0381/Sections/0381.026.html
- <http://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/consumer-protections/#url=Bill-of-Rights>
- <http://www.tricare.mil/rights>

Other resources:

- http://www.patienttalk.info/AHA-Patient_Bill_of_Rights.htm
- <http://www.cancer.org/treatment/findingandpayingfortreatment/understandingfinancialandlegalmatters/patients-bill-of-rights>
- http://uhs.fsu.edu/docs/patient_rights.pdf
- http://www.ehow.com/facts_4868817_what-patient-bill-rights.html
- <http://www.western dental.com/about-us/patient-bill-of-rights/>
- http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/the_johns_hopkins_hospital/docs/bill_of_rights.pdf
- <http://www.aapsonline.org/patients/billrights.htm>
- http://www.geisinger.org/patients/pt_rights_resps.html
- <http://www.aha.org/advocacy-issues/communicatingpts/pt-care-partnership.shtml>