

## ABOUT THE CHARTER

Everyone who is seeking or receiving care in the Australian Health system has certain rights regarding the nature of that care. These are described in the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights. The rights included in the Charter relate to access, safety, respect, communication, participation, privacy and comment.

The Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights is available to everyone in the healthcare system. It allows patients, consumers, families, carers and healthcare providers to share an understanding of the rights of people receiving health care.

Patients, consumers, healthcare providers and health service organisations all have important parts to play in achieving healthcare rights.

Healthcare providers play a vital role in ensuring that quality care is delivered to patients and consumers and, by their professionalism and dedication, ensure that the very best outcomes are achieved for everyone in the system.

A genuine partnership between patients, consumers and healthcare providers is important so that everyone achieves the best possible outcomes.

## USING THE CHARTER

This brochure discusses each of the seven Charter rights, and provides some guidance to healthcare providers about ways they can contribute to ensuring that the rights are upheld.

The rights in the Charter express many of the actions and obligations that healthcare providers already have under existing organisational or professional codes or policies.

## MORE INFORMATION

Healthcare providers contribute to good health care outcomes by offering information and advice on how the processes work in the particular healthcare setting or facility.

Patients or consumers may often hesitate to raise issues about their rights; these should be discussed with them and they should be advised of how they can obtain information about their rights.

For more information on the Charter and how you can contribute to achieving healthcare rights visit :

[www.safetyandquality.gov.au](http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au)



# THE AUSTRALIAN CHARTER OF HEALTHCARE RIGHTS

*A GUIDE FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS*



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE CHARTER AND HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE TO ACHIEVING HEALTHCARE RIGHTS VISIT [WWW.SAFETYANDQUALITY.GOV.AU](http://WWW.SAFETYANDQUALITY.GOV.AU)

AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION  
ON SAFETY AND QUALITY  
IN HEALTHCARE

## ACCESS

### A right to health care.

Access is enhanced when the best and most appropriate care is provided to a patient or consumer, including using other facilities if needed.

Being mindful of the whole of treatment needs of the patient, such as continuing treatment and out of hours services, also contributes to achieving the right of access.

## SAFETY

### A right to safe and high quality care.

Safety is addressed by being alert to patient or consumer needs, ensuring patients or consumers understand the treatment they are to receive and by participating in existing patient safety systems.



## RESPECT

### A right to be shown respect, dignity and consideration.

Respect means that all participants are mindful of a patient's or consumer's environment and background, and providing health care and advice that is appropriate to the patient's or consumer's needs.

## COMMUNICATION

### A right to be informed about services, treatment, options and costs in a clear and open way.

Communication is enhanced if healthcare providers ensure that the patient or consumer understands the information being provided to them and by being alert to signs of confusion or misunderstanding by the patient or consumer and/or carers.

Wherever practical, healthcare providers should make sure arrangements are made to meet patient or consumer language and communication needs.

## PARTICIPATION

### A right to be included in decisions and choices about care.

Participation by patients in their health care is encouraged by engaging the patient or consumer and/or carers in discussions about treatment options. This includes informing patients and consumers of their right to refuse or withdraw consent at any time and inviting patients and consumers to consent for care or treatment that is experimental or part of teaching or research.

Healthcare providers should be alert to a patient's or consumer's circumstances and consider these circumstances when providing care.



## PRIVACY

### A right to privacy and confidentiality of provided information.

Privacy requires that all participants be sensitive to the privacy needs of patients or consumers and by ensuring that patient information is only shared with other appropriate health professionals.

## COMMENT

### A right to comment on care and having concerns addressed.

The opportunity to comment is important and enhanced by being attentive to the concerns of patients or consumers and/or carers and encouraging them to engage in two way communication. Patients, consumers and/or carers should be helped to articulate their concerns and be informed of comment options available to them.

Healthcare providers should facilitate the efficient and equitable resolution of complaints by participating in organisational processes and should also look for improvements in health care provision as an outcome from interactions with patients, consumers, their carers and their families.