

## St James's Hospital Patient Charter

### Introduction

A patient charter is an official document that lists patients' rights. The first patient charter was drawn up by the Department of Health in 1992. Together with the HSE it was revised and renamed the 'Health Service Charter' in 2008. The St James's Hospital Patient Charter is based on the principles contained in the Health Service Charter, which are, access, dignity and respect, safe and effective services, communication and information, participation, privacy, improving health and accountability. This charter summarises your rights and responsibilities when you are a patient in St James's Hospital.

### 1. Access to hospital services:

**We will provide access to hospital services in a fair and equal way.**

#### What you can expect:

- Admission to the hospital for examination and stabilising treatment, during a medical emergency.
- A consultant or senior doctor to review your referral for admission to hospital or an out-patient appointment. They will place you on the waiting list based on the clinical information provided.
- To receive information about the time and date of your first appointment.
- To be told in good time if your admission or appointment is being cancelled. In exceptional cases this may be cancelled at very short notice. You have the right to be given a new appointment.
- To be given information about hospital charges.
- Your hospital consultant to consider referring you elsewhere, if a recommended medical procedure is not available in St James's Hospital.

#### What you can do to help:

- Let us know if you cannot attend your appointments.
- When attending the hospital, bring a list of your current medication and any information which you think may be helpful.
- Pay your hospital bill on time. Any difficulties you experience with your bill can be discussed with hospital staff.

## **2. Safe and Effective Care:**

**We will do our best to provide the best and safest possible care for you.**

**Your care will be provided by trusted, trained professionals.**

### **What you can expect:**

- To receive the right treatment and care for your needs. Your care will be based on expert knowledge and the most up to date evidence.
- To be treated and cared for in the safest possible environment.
- All healthcare staff to prioritise the prevention of infection.
- To receive safe and coordinated care when you move between services.
- Staff to help manage and relieve your pain.
- Visits by your relatives and friends during allocated visiting times.
- In exceptional circumstances it may be required to restrict visiting to the hospital. When this happens we will try to help you to communicate with your family and friends and provide support when they cannot be with you.

### **What you can do to help:**

- Provide any information which you think might be helpful during examinations.
- Ask for somebody to be with you during examinations, tests or procedures, if you wish.
- Have someone with you for emotional support, if you wish.
- Nominate a person, whose wishes may be taken into account if at some point you are unable to make decisions.
- Be mindful of the number of visitors you have at any one time.

### **3. Communication and Information:**

**We listen carefully to you. We communicate openly and honestly.**

**The information given to you is clear and in a way that is easy to understand.**

#### **What you can expect:**

- To know the name of the consultant who is treating you.
- Staff to introduce themselves and their roles to you.
- To know when students or other trainees are involved in your care.
- To be given information in a way that you can understand and have the opportunity to ask questions.
- To be involved in making decisions about your care and you will be kept up to date about your tests, procedures, diagnosis, treatment, medication, risks and side effects.
- To be involved in making decisions about your discharge arrangements and you will be kept up to date about the healthcare you may need after discharge from the hospital.
- Your general practitioner (GP) will be informed about your diagnosis, treatment, medication and future appointments.
- To be informed in an open and honest way if something goes wrong with your treatment or care. This is called 'Open Disclosure'.

#### **What you can do to help:**

- Let us know if you need help with communication or if you need interpretative services.
- Ask questions that will help you to understand, manage and improve your health.
- If there is something that you do not understand, let us know and we will try to explain it better.
- Inform staff if you have any concerns regarding your treatment or medication.
- You can choose to have a family member or another person to support you, when communicating about your discharge.
- Provide accurate and complete information about your health, address, telephone number, date of birth, health insurer or medical card.
- Tell us the name and contact details of the person with whom you would like us to share information about your care. Please also provide details of the person you would like us to contact in case of an emergency. This may be the same person for you, but if it is not please let us know.

#### **4. Dignity, Respect and Equality:**

**We treat people with dignity, respect and kindness.**

##### **What you can expect:**

- To receive care in a considerate, respectful, kind and compassionate way.
- To be treated without discrimination and receive care that respects your culture, beliefs and values and other characteristics such as race, colour, nationality, political beliefs, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical or mental disability, religion and ethnicity.
- When needed, hospital staff will provide end-of-life care that is dignified and comforting and that respects your wishes.
- To have the people who are important to you by your side if you are receiving end of life care. If visiting restrictions are in place, such as during a pandemic, special arrangements can be made on compassionate grounds.

##### **What you can do to help:**

- Treat staff and other patients with dignity, respect and consideration.
- Be respectful of other patient's property and hospital property.
- Be mindful of your behaviour, the language you use and noise levels.
- Follow hospital rules and staff guidance.
- Give honest feedback to the staff about the quality of care you received or are receiving.
- Let us know if you want to talk to the pastoral care team or other support services.
- Discuss your organ donation wishes with your family and staff.

## **5. Privacy and Confidentiality:**

**We will do our best to ensure that you have adequate personal space and privacy when you use our services.**

**We protect the confidentiality of your personal information.**

### **What you can expect:**

- Your personal health information will be kept confidential. It will only be seen or discussed by those who are involved in your care.
- Your personal health information will be stored securely and will not be shared with anyone without your consent.
- Your health information may be accessed for audit purposes. This enables the hospital to review the quality of the care provided.
- Access to your health information record when requested. We always try to make these available. If there is a risk that some information may cause harm to you, this information will be shared with you through a health professional such as a hospital consultant or your general practitioner.

### **What you can do to help:**

- Be mindful of other patients' and staff privacy and confidentiality.
- Do not look for or share any information about other patients.
- Be mindful of other patient's personal space.
- Do not take pictures, videos or recordings without permission from hospital staff.
- Try to limit the amount of personal belongings you bring into the hospital.
- It is advisable not to bring any valuables into the hospital.

## **6. Informed Consent:**

**We will help you to make informed decisions about your treatment and care.**

### **What you can expect:**

- To be asked to give your permission, also known as consent, before any treatment or procedure is started.
- To be given the information you need to make informed consent decisions. This includes information about the risks and benefits of your procedure or treatment and alternatives to that treatment.
- The consent document will clearly state the type of treatment or procedure you will be having.
- If you are unable to give consent because of serious illness or problems with your capacity to make decisions, your treatment will only ever be given if your doctor decides that it is urgently needed in order to prevent immediate serious harm to you.
- To have the opportunity to discuss your consent if you wish with a relative or other person you choose.
- You may be asked to be involved when students are being taught. This ensures students receive the best possible training in patient care. You will be asked for permission beforehand and have the right to refuse if you wish.
- You may be asked to take part in clinical trials or research concerning the use of new medication or medical devices. You will never be included in clinical trials or research without your informed consent.

### **What you can do to help:**

- Be involved in making decisions about your treatment and care.
- Choose to involve your family, carers or other people in your healthcare treatment, if you wish.
- Make sure you have the information you need to help you make decisions before any treatment or procedure.

## **7. Accountability:**

**We welcome feedback about your experiences in the hospital. We will respond to your complaints and use your feedback to make improvements to the service we provide.**

### **What you can expect:**

- Your treatment or care will not be affected if you give feedback or make a complaint.
- Your complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the Hospital's Complaints Management Policy.
- If you make a complaint you will receive information about the changes or improvements that have been made as a result of your complaint.
- Information about providing feedback or making a complaint is available in the hospital and on the hospital website.

### **What you can do to help:**

- Give your feedback or make suggestions to any member of staff while you are in the hospital.
- Tell us about your experience. Information on providing formal feedback or making a complaint can be found on the hospital website or by contacting [patientfeedback@stjames.ie](mailto:patientfeedback@stjames.ie)