

PATIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Knowing about their rights and responsibilities can help patients better look after their health. It is important to read your rights and responsibilities carefully. If you have any questions, please seek advice from a professional.

Dignity, quality, safety and wellbeing

There are a range of rights and responsibilities in place related to the provision of healthcare services. These are designed to ensure patient dignity and wellbeing as well as assuring quality and safety.

Choosing services and caregivers

Patients have the right to choose healthcare services and providers depending on available resources and hospital regulations.

Right to information

Patients are entitled to be kept fully informed about:

- Their health status and prognosis
- All potential treatment options

Informed consent and right of refusal

After being informed, patients are free to accept or refuse healthcare. Once given, consent can be withdrawn at any time. For further information on informed consent, please consult Frequently Asked Questions on the ERS website at www.ers.pt

Personalized or individualized healthcare

Patients are entitled to receive appropriate healthcare in a timely fashion, provided in a humane and respectful manner.

In walk-in or emergency situations, disabled patients with >60% impairment will be treated before other patients.

Data protection and privacy

Patients have the right to:

- protect their personal data and private life
- access their personal data. They may need to correct or complete their personal information, in accordance with legal requirements.

Processing of health data must be appropriate, necessary and legally compliant. It must not be excessive.

Confidentiality

Patients have a right to confidentiality. Healthcare professionals are obliged to maintain confidentiality, unless a specific legal exemption applies, or a court decision requires its disclosure.

Spiritual and religious support

Patients are entitled to spiritual and religious support, whatever their beliefs are. Access to spiritual and religious support should be made available.

Upon request, legally recognised churches or religious communities may provide spiritual and religious support to National Health Service patients.

Feedback and complaints

Feedback is welcomed whether patients wish to provide positive feedback, or to make a complaint or suggestion.

The hospital is obliged to have a complaints book and make it available on request. Patients have a legal right to complain and receive a response, as well as to receive compensation if they are harmed.

Complaints can be made by filling in the on-site complaints book or via an online form available on the Entidade Reguladora da Saúde (ERS, Portuguese Health Regulatory Authority) website. They can also be sent by email to the address below or by letter.

To learn more about feedback and complaints, please visit www.ers.pt or email: complaints@ers.pt.

Right of association

Patients may create or belong to associations or interest groups, which represent them and protect their interests, in order to promote their health.

Right to be accompanied

Patients are entitled to be accompanied in the following situations:

1. In the Emergency Services of the Portuguese National Health Service (SNS)
2. Pregnant women in all stages of labour
3. Children and young people up to 18 years old
4. If they have a disability
5. If they are dependent on another
6. People with an advanced terminal condition or at the end of life

Patients who are minors or are legally incapacitated

Legal representatives of patients who are under the age of 18 or who are legally incapacitated also have rights and may refuse assistance in accordance with the principles of the Constitution.

Patient responsibilities

To facilitate the delivery of quality healthcare, patients are expected to meet certain requirements. They must:

- 1-Respect the rights of other patients and of the healthcare professionals with whom they have contact.
- 2-Follow health service regulations.
- 3-Collaborate with their health professionals in all aspects of their care.
- 4-Pay for healthcare services received, if applicable.

SUMMARY

Patient Rights	Patients Responsibilities
Appropriate individual health care	
Data protection and privacy	Respect patients and staff
Confidentiality	Follow the rules
Information	Collaborate with health professionals
Consent	
Feedback and complaints	Meet financial obligations
Right to be accompanied	
Spiritual and religious support	Pay the due expenses
Right of association	



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