



Principles of Patients'/Clients' Rights and Responsibilities

1. ***All Patients/Clients have the right to informed consent in treatment decisions, timely access to specialty care, and confidentiality protections.***

Patients/Clients should be treated courteously with dignity and respect. Before consenting to specific care choices, they should receive complete and easily understood information about their condition and treatment options. Patients/Clients should be entitled to timely referral and access to needed specialty care and other services; confidentiality of their medical records and communications with providers; and respect for their legal advanced directives or living wills. Identifiable photographs of Patients/Clients shall not be used without the written and signed consent of the client or their LAR. Patients/Clients shall not be given any responsibility requiring access to confidential information. Patients/Clients and patient/client information shall not be used in research without the written and signed consent of the patient/client or their LAR.

2. ***All Patients/Clients have the right to concise and easily understood information about their coverage.***

This information should include the range of covered benefits, required authorizations, and service restrictions/limitations (such as on the use of certain healthcare providers and prescription drugs).

3. ***All Patients/Clients have the right to know how coverage payment decisions are made and how they can be fairly and openly appealed.***

Patients/Clients are entitled to information about how coverage decisions are made, i.e., how "medically necessary" treatment is determined, and how quality assurance is conducted. Patients/Clients and their family caregivers should have access to an open, simple, and timely process to appeal negative coverage decisions on tests and treatments they believe to be necessary.

4. ***All Patients/Clients have the right to a reasonable choice of providers and useful information about provider options.***

Patients/Clients are entitled to a reasonable choice of healthcare providers and the ability to change providers if dissatisfied with their care. Information should be available



on provider credentials and facility accreditation reports, provider expertise relative to specific diseases and disorders, and the criteria used by provider networks to select and retain providers. The latter should include information about whether and how a Patient/Client can remain with a provider who leaves or is not part of a plan network. Patients/Clients have the right to ask for a change of provider, however, the request will only be granted when it is reasonable, and an alternative exists. Requests that are discriminatory in nature will not be granted.

5. ***All Patients/Clients have the right to know what provider incentives or restrictions might influence practice patterns.***

Patients/Clients also have the right to know the basis for provider payments, any potential conflicts of interest that may exist, and any financial incentives that may be in place.

6. ***Additional Patient/Client Protections***

Patients/Clients shall not be required to make public statements that acknowledge gratitude for MHS' services. Patients/Clients shall not be required to perform in public gatherings or for fund-raising activities.

Patients/Clients (except for employees who are patients/clients) shall not be assigned the responsibility for the care of other patients/ clients.

All Patients/Clients, To the Extent Capable, Have the Responsibility To:

(It is recognized that Clients may suffer significant physical and/or mental conditions that may limit their ability to fulfill these responsibilities.)

1. ***Pursue healthy lifestyles.***

Patients/Clients should pursue lifestyles known to promote positive health results, such as proper diet and nutrition, adequate rest, and regular exercise. Simultaneously, they should avoid behaviors known to be detrimental to one's health, such as smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, and drug abuse.

2. ***Become knowledgeable about their health plans.***

Patients/Clients should read and become familiar with the terms, coverage provisions, rules, and restrictions of their health plans. They should not be hesitant to inquire with appropriate sources when additional information or clarification is needed about these matters.



3. ***Actively participate in decisions about their healthcare.***

Patients/Clients should seek when recommended for their age group, an annual medical examination and be present at all other scheduled healthcare appointments. They should provide accurate information to providers regarding their medical and personal histories, and current symptoms and conditions. They should ask questions of providers to determine the potential risks, benefits, and costs of treatment alternatives. Where appropriate, this should include information about the availability and accessibility of experimental treatments and clinical trials. Additionally, Patients/Clients should also seek and read literature about their conditions and weigh all pertinent factors in making informed decisions about their care.

4. ***Cooperate on mutually accepted courses of treatment.***

Patients/Clients should cooperate fully with providers in complying with mutually accepted treatment regimens and regularly reporting on treatment progress. If serious side effects, complications, or worsening of the condition occur, they should notify their providers promptly. They should also inform providers of other medications and treatments they are pursuing simultaneously.

¹ National Health Council Board of Directors. "Principles of Patient's Rights and Responsibilities," (National Health Council Principle, 1995) Washington, D.C. www.nationalhealthcouncil.org/pages/patients-rights.php, Accessed April 1, 2010.

Grievance Review

Each patient/client, LAR, and/or advocate has the right to a grievance review if they feel the Patient's/Client's rights have been violated. This grievance review would be consistent with the Grievance Policy.