

# **Australian Charter on Healthcare Rights**

## **Access – a right to healthcare**

- You have a fundamental right to adequate and timely healthcare.

## **Safety – a right to safe and high quality care**

- Clients, consumers and healthcare workers are entitled to a safe, secure and supportive environment.
- If you are unsure about what is happening to you or if you think something has been missed in your care, alert your carer, who will then discuss with Care Coordinator.
- Let your Care Coordinator know any circumstances that might make your health care riskier or of any other safety concerns that you have upon initial assessment.

## **Respect – a right to be shown respect, dignity and consideration**

- You are entitled to receive care in a way that is respectful of your culture, beliefs, values and characteristics like age and gender.
- It is important to tell your carer of any changes in your circumstances.
- Discuss plans that have been agreed with staff and let them know if you have been unable to follow these plans.
- Let staff know if there are changes to your condition or new symptoms.
- Respect also includes being mindful of healthcare staff.

## **Communication – a right to be informed about services, treatment, options and costs in a clear and open way**

- To obtain the best possible health outcomes, the exchange of information between clients, consumers and staff must be full and open and can be facilitated by clear, timely and effective two way communication.
- Your Care Coordinator will tell you about the care you are receiving and help you understand what is happening to you. You can contribute to communication by being as open and honest as you can be. Ask questions of staff if you would like more information about any aspect of your care.
- If you are experiencing difficulties communicating with staff, ask your family to help or, if English is not your first language, you can request a free interpreter service provided in person or by phone.

## **Participation – a right to be included in decisions and choices about care**

- To obtain good health outcomes, it is important for clients to participate in decisions and choices about their care and health needs. This provides the basis for informed consent and informed decision-making.
- Take an active role in your health care and participate as fully as you wish about the decisions about your care and treatment. Consider involving your family, carers or other nominated support people to support your decision-making.
- Seek a second opinion if you have any uncertainty.

- Give or withhold your permission (consent) for treatment.

### **Privacy – a right to privacy and confidentiality of provided information.**

- Everyone needs to respect the privacy of other people. Clients have a right to expect that their personal health and other information will be collected, used, disclosed and stored in accordance with the relevant laws about privacy, and that this information will remain confidential unless the law allows disclosure or the individuals direct otherwise.
- In some situations your health information will need to be shared between health providers.
- You can also contribute by respecting the privacy and confidentiality of others.

### **Comment – a right to comment on care and having concerns addressed.**

- All participants in Yellow Door services benefit from processes that encourage feedback about the services received by clients and that encourage any concerns are resolved in an open, fair and timely manner.
- Healthcare providers want to solve problems quickly but they need to be told about the problem first. If you have any suggestions about how services could be improved please let staff know.
- When making a complaint, try to provide your feedback in a way that is respectful to others.

### **References**

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare, 2007 *Summary Paper – A Comparison of Patient Charters in Australia*

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare, A guide for patients, consumers, carers and families (brochure). Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights

Australian Commission on Safety and quality in Healthcare, National Priorities, Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights (<http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/national-priorities/charter-of-healthcare-rights/>)